WHAT INDIA WANTS

AUTONOMY WITHIN THE EMPIRE

BY

G. A. NATESAN, B.A., F.M.U.

Editor, "The Indian Review."

WITH FOREWORDS BY

SIR NARAYAN G. CHANDAVARKAR.
HON. THE RAJA OF MAHOMEDABAD.
MR. V. P. MADHAVA RAO, C.I.E.
RAJA SIR HARNAM SINGH, K.C.I.E.
PUNDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA.
SIR JAMSETJEE JEJEEBHOY, *BART.*
BABU SURENDRANATH BANERJEA.
SIR P. S. SIVASWAMI AIYAR, K.C.S.I.
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HON. MR. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI.
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TO

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN,

THE SAINTLY ENGLISHMAN

WHO FOR OVER HALF A CENTURY HAS BEEN

UNCEASINGLY AND UNOSTENTATIOUSLY

LABOURING FOR THE ADVANCEMENT

OF

THE PEOPLE OF INDIA

AS A TOKEN OF GRATITUDE

"FOR ALL THAT HE HAS HOPED FOR US"

"FOR ALL THAT HE HAS DONE FOR US"

"FOR ALL THAT HE HAS BORNE AND BRAVED FOR US."

PREFACE.

In this book I have tried to present a brief and succinct account of the history of India's demand for Self-Government. I have also endeavoured to show that the constitutional reforms now urged by the Indian people through their leading political organizations are "in the line of continuous growth of the Indian polity and involve no violent departure from the principles or methods hitherto recognised by authority."

Since this book was in the Press, an important announcement has been made in the House of Commons that the policy of His Majesty's Government "is that of increasing the association of Indians in every branch of administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire."

The time has now come when His Majesty's Government should make a distinct and courageous advance in this direction and give the people of the land a real and effective voice in the administration of the country. The only way to achieve this is by the transference of the uncontrolled power now vested in the Bureaucracy to the representatives of the people so as to enable them to regulate the policy of the State, control the finances, and make the executive responsible to the people of India.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank my esteemed friends who have been good enough to peruse advance copies of this book and favour me with their views.

October, 1917. G. A. NATESAN.

WHAT INDIA WANTS

BY

THE HON. BABU BHUPENDRANATH BASU.

Thousands of our boys are receiving education on Western lines in Indian Universities based on Western models; hundreds of them are daily flocking to the Universities of Europe, America and Japan and on their return home spreading the knowledge that they have acquired. You may chain Prometheus, but the fire is lighted and cannot be extinguished. (Hear, hear.) India wants a higher life, a wider sphere of activity and usefulness. India wants that her Government should be consistent with her growing self-respect and intellectuality. India wants that the presumption which has all along existed, and which the Board of Directors, in 1833, made a vain attempt to dispel, namely, that the Indians can only rise to a certain limit, should be removed from the precincts of her Courts as it has been from the Statute-Books and the door to her services should not be closed by artificial barriers against her own sons. India wants that her children should have the same rights of equal citizenship as other members of the Empire. (Hear, hear, and applause). India wants the removal of vexatious hindrances on the liberty of speech and freedom of the Press (hear, hear, and applause) fruitless and dangerous alike to the Government and the people. And above all India wants that her Government should be an autonomous Government under the British Empire.—(From the Presidential Address to the Madras Congress, 1914.)

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FOREWORDS.

Sir Narayan G. Chandavarkar, K.C.I.E.

The present administration in India is virtually an administration of the Indian Civil Service, which is almost entirely composed of British officials. They are indeed capable and conscientious and have done good work; but they are the slaves of a system, which makes the Service a close Service, wedded to red tape and routine, slow to discern and move with the times, jealous of outside and independent criticism and, owing to their comparative aloofness from Indian society, due to social and other causes, more or less out of touch with, because unable to find out, real Indian sentiment and public opinion. The result is that, in important matters affecting the Indian conditions, knowledge comes too late to the Service and to the Indian administration which it practically controls, too late *i.e.* after things have gone wrong, public dissatisfaction has become acute, and mischief has been done. Some of the best members of the Service have themselves admitted that. For instance, refer to the speech of the late Mr. Crosthwaite on the Jhansi Encumbered Estates Bill in the Imperial Legislative Council in May 1882 and to Mr. George Cambell's speech in the House of Commons on Feb. 28,1879.

The Mesopotamia Commission's report, condemning the system of Indian administration, only

repeats the lessons of the Mutiny of 1857, of the Orissa Famine of 1866, of the sensational muddle of the Indian finances in 1880, of the famine administration of 1877, and of the legislative and administrative measures relating to the chronic indebtedness of the Indian *ryot* (agriculturist) and to the land revenue systems of India and to the partition of Bengal.

As Lord Northbrook in substance said, when he was Viceroy, in a despatch of 1875 to the Secretary of State for India, and subsequently also in the House of Lords, the present system of Indian administration suffers seriously for want of a constitutional machinery fitted to find out Indian sentiment and public opinion as the basis of legislative and administrative and especially financial measures.

There can be no other way to remedy that serious defect of the system than to provide a Constitution which shall make the administration primarily and at one end responsible to Indian public opinion, and finally, at the other end, to the British Parliament.

I am, therefore, generally speaking, in agreement with the proposals for Indian reform made in the memorandum of the nineteen non-official Indian members of the Imperial Legislative Council and in the scheme adopted by the National Congress and the Muslim League at their respective sessions held at Lucknow in December, 1916. The best merit of the memorandum and of the scheme is that they aim on the whole at what Lord Ellenborough, who had been Governor-General of India for some years, and afterwards President of

the Board of Control during the regime of the East India Company, wrote in 1859:—"We must abandon the exclusive British system and nationalise our Government."

The memorandum and the scheme have been condemned in some quarters as being revolutionary on the main ground that their proposals transfer power from the Indian Civil Service, who (it is said) are best fitted to represent the masses in India, to the Indian educated classes, who (it is maintained) are not the true representatives of the masses. We may, without fear of the result in favour of the Indian educated classes, invite one test, which is a sure test, on this question. If we take the history of the administration from 1858 down to now, with special reference to the amelioration of the condition of the Indian agriculturists, who form seventy-five per cent. of the people in India, we shall incontestibly find that measures advocated in their interests by the educated Indians through their newspapers and public associations and at public meetings had been strenuously opposed as chimerical by the British officials in India for a long time and were ultimately more or less adopted under the stress of circumstances. It is the view of the Indian educated classes regarding the ryot's lot which, generally speaking, has after more or less painful experience to some extent won; and the official view has yielded in the end.

In publishing this book on "What India Wants," and presenting to the British and the Indian public the view of the best mind of India on the change required in the Indian administra-

tive system, Mr. Natesan is rendering very useful service to England and India alike. Such a book as this ought to clear the air and give us the Indian situation in its full and true perspective at this moment when England is proving ready to further justify her mission in India and to prove once more true to her ancient tradition of helping nations to govern themselves as parts of her world-wide Empire.

The Hon the Raja Saheb of Mahomedabad.

The psychological moment when Britain should take a definite step towards conferring on India the right of managing her own internal affairs has in my opinion arrived. Any delay would be fraught with possibilities of danger.

India does not desire what have been termed catastrophic changes in the government and the administration of the country; but what she does desire is that she should be put on the road to self-government within the Empire; and that no obstacles should be placed in her way. To this end the reforms contemplated in the memorandum of the nineteen non-official members of His Excellency the Viceroy's Council, and the scheme prepared jointly by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Moslem League are the minimum which the United India urges the freedom-loving British public to promulgate in this great "dependency"? of the Empire.

Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao, C.I.E.

The appearance of Mr. Natesan's book on "What India Wants" is an event of first rate importance at this juncture. It presents in a succinct form facts and arguments for giving full Self-Government to India within the Empire. It gives the history of the British connection with India from almost the beginning of the last century and rightly starts with quoting the words of the Marquis of Hastings who laid the foundations of the Modern Indian Empire after putting down the lawless Pindaries and subverting the Mahratta power. The rulers of those days, possibly animated by the generous spirit of the French Revolution, looked upon the possession of India as a Trust and themselves as charged with the duty of preparing the people, who were the inheritors of an ancient civilization, to rule themselves. They contemplated their early retirement from the country when their work had been done and looked upon such retirement with complacency and with a sense of duty righty discharged. These generous sentiments were later on embodied in a legislative enactment, the Charter Act of 1833. But from this year onwards a change would appear to have come over the British Authorities as regards the spirit in which effect should be given to the explicit declaration of policy made in the Act, *viz.*, Equality of treatment of Europeans and Indians as regards holding offices in the Government of the country. The book traces this change in the attitude of the authorities and quotes the utterances of

responsible rulers to show how by the time the Charter had to be renewed in 1853, no progress had been made in giving effect to the liberal principles laid down in 1833. From the time of the Royal Proclamation of 1858, there was even a retrograde tendency and the regulations were so framed as to place positive obstacles in the way of Indians getting equality of treatment in spite of the noble utterances of the great Queen.

Mr. Natesan shews how the Council Act of 1892 in passing which such high hopes had been raised proved a dismal failure, and how the purposes of Act of 1909 which was looked forward to as giving Indian representatives an effective control over the everyday administration of the country were defeated by the regulations framed under it and the spirit of hostility shewn by the Executive towards the representatives of the people. A good case has been made out for transferring the Government from the Bureaucracy to the people. The author of the book has discharged the task undertaken by him with rare ability and the small handy volume though unpretentious in look, marshalls facts and arguments in a manner that must drive even a most casual reader to the irresistible conclusion that India stands in need of a radical change in her system of Government. This admirable book will be invaluable to those who have to frame proposals for the introduction of Self-Government in its full sense and those who have to guide the investigations of Mr. Montagu when he visits India.

Raja Sir Harnam Singh, K.C.I.E.

I have read Mr. Natesan's brochure entitled "What India Wants" with interest and some care. In my opinion it contains an admirably compressed historical account of the progress of constitutionalism in India. The necessity and advisability of the first demand in the memorandum of the nineteen is amply proved by this account and by the paragraphs cited from the speeches and writings of some of the best British statesmen both in India and England. A very good case is also made out for the urgent necessity of some definite steps being taken to confer a substantial amount of Self-Government on this country both as an earnest of the future and because the country has now reached the stage where it must make an experiment for itself and when even such mistakes as the people of India may make in the course of that experiment will be more fruitful and will conduce more to the ultimate progress of the country than the best form of external Government. Opinions may differ on the details as to the nature and amount, if one may so phrase it, of the Self-Government to be bestowed but I do not think there could be found a single dissentient voice among the best minds of India to-day on the principles involved in the memorandum of the nineteen. I think the circulation of Mr. Natesan's book in England would furnish information in a succinct form to the leaders of British public opinion who may not always have the time to look into Indian politics for themselves. I have every confidence that with a full knowledge of

the facts the British democracy will realise that wise statesmanship requires the grant of Self-Government to India in the near future—since a beginning has to be made, this seems to be the most opportune time for Government to do so, at least to lay the foundation of Self-Government which is the goal the people are aspiring to.

It might be said the author has dwelt on one side of the picture overlooking the difficulties in the way. But I doubt if the difficulties are great or insurmountable. The country will not be satisfied without having Self-Government throughout India.

Hon. Pundit M. M. Malaviya.

Mr. Natesan's admirable brochure entitled "What India Wants" is a valuable contribution to the cause of Indian constitutional reform. The historical summary of the movement for self-government which he has given will show that though like many other movements it has received a great impetus from the present war, it is as old as the Indian National Congress and represents the result of the deliberations of the most thoughtful Indians during the last thirty years. The second part of the pamphlet makes an excellent presentment of the case for the reforms advocated in the memorandum of the nineteen elected members of the Imperial Legislative Council and elaborated in the scheme adopted by the Congress and the Moslem League. Altogether it is a very useful and timely publication, and will, I doubt not, be helpful in promoting a correct understanding and appreciation of the constitutional changes of which India stands in need.

Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, *Bart.*

This admirable little summary of the demands of educated Indians deserves to be widely read. Differences of opinion may legitimately exist as to many of the proposals embodied in the scheme of reforms put forward jointly by the Congress and the Moslem League. There may be a divergence of views regarding the pace at which it would be safe to allow India to march towards her destiny. But the essential principle, *viz.*, that her proper place is among the self-governing units of the Empire, has been accepted by the best minds in the country, and has been recently declared by the Secretary of State and emphatically reasserted by His Excellency the Viceroy, to be the true end and aim of British policy in India. This solemn declaration, which is a striking proof both of good faith and of statesmanship, must help to clarify the atmosphere and to create a better understanding between the two people, which augurs well for the future of England and India alike. Any effort which may be made in this connection to bring about a closer appreciation of each other's point of view should be warmly welcomed and encouraged. Mr. Natesan's clear, concise and vigorous exposition of the demands of India stands in this category, and ought to be carefully studied even by those who find themselves in disagreement with the scheme of reforms dealt with in this neat little brochure.

The Hon'ble Mr. Surendranath Banerjee.

Mr. G. A. Natesan has done a valuable service to the cause of Indian political progress by bringing out a little book which he styles "What India Wants." It is a vigorous plea for autonomy within the Empire and is a spirited appeal to the British democracy. It contains a vast amount of useful information and will be specially helpful at the present time when a scheme of readjustment is being seriously taken in hand by the responsible Rulers of India. It is a book which I think every student of present day Indian politics should provide himself with. It will be a valuable guide to every member of the Indian National Congress and the Moslem League in his efforts to help the political progress of India. I have myself found the book very useful in many ways.

Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyar, K. C. S. I., C. I. E.

At a time when the air is thick with proposals all the world over, for political reconstruction after the war, it would be singular, if India alone were left unaffected by the movement. While the discussion of such proposals is regarded with favour in other parts of the Empire, it has been deprecated in this country as being inopportune and mischievous. The proposals put forward in the Congress-Moslem-League scheme of post-war reforms have on the one hand been denounced as revolutionary and impracticable and have on the other hand been represented as the irreducible minimum of reforms required. The ultimate decision will of course rest with His Majesty's

Government and indirectly with the British Public. Mr. G. A. Natesan's booklet is an attempt to acquaint the British Public with the demands of the educated classes and the circumstances which have led to the formulation of these demands. Barring certain small sections in one Presidency, there can be little doubt that the Congress scheme represents the wishes of the educated classes in India and is therefore entitled to serious consideration. The constitutional changes wanted are in the direction of giving a real and effective voice in the administration of the people of this country and not the mere multiplication of throats to voice their wishes.

Mr. Natesan's booklet will be welcomed by the public as a timely and valuable exposition of the demands of the educated classes.

Sirdar Jogendra Singh.

Sir Rabindranath Tagore in a moving poem which he published in a recent issue of the *Modern Review* in a pathetic parable asks the question :—

> " The day is come
> But where is India ? "

The world has, perhaps, never seen an age with a larger faith or a nobler spirit of sacrifice. Democracy has proved itself. The morning sun of the new age has risen.

> " The temple hall is filled with pilgrims
> But where is India ? "

What India wants is her place amongst the nations of the world. India wishes to share

in the great movement of human progress, to offer her treasures of sweetness, reverence and knowledge to the Commonwealth of nations which meet under the British flag. India now seeks opportunities of growth under the impulse of new ideals which are not divorced entirely from the old. The orthodox may deplore a decline in the old idolatrous moods which ruled India yesterday, but the stirring of new life marks an awakening and the people are moving forward to partake in the new redemption. India, therefore, expects all those who claim to be her friends to befriend her in this her hour of redemption and help her to achieve ideals of human freedom and human equality.

Mr. Montagu outlined the policy of His Majesty's Government and India expects Indians and Englishmen to come together and take in full faith the first steps towards the attainment of responsible self-government. The Englishmen in India owe to themselves and to His Majesty the King Emperor whom they serve to lay firm the foundations of the Empire in the hearts of the people. It lies with them to win affection for the King-Emperor or lose it. India wants all her friends to combine and surmount the difficulties, making her path smooth, helping in the advance which has been promised, and preparing her for a larger enfranchisement.

The advance towards self-government will help the administration in making it more fruitful and many things which baffled achievements from outside will be easily attained when the things move from within. The coming events proclaim the dawn

of a new era in which both Englishmen and Indians should rejoice, for it promises fulfilment of the great ideals which have inspired British statesmen; ideals solemnly proclaimed and which Mr. Natesan has so judiciously brought together in his small book "What India Wants". The united effort towards the attainment of these ideals holds forth promise of future greatness not only for India but the whole British Empire.

The Hon. Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri.

Mr. G. A. Natesan has added to his numerous services to India by the publication of a little book written by himself and entitled, "What India Wants." Readers who wish to know the Indian case for constitutional advance in the internal governance of the country will find it in its pages expounded with much vigour and directness and supported by an array of quotations which is both full and weighty. Few students of Indian affairs of the day will dispute its claim to be regarded as in the main a trustworthy presentment of the ambitions of the progressive school of political thought in the country. Mr. Natesan makes out that these ambitions are in the line of continuous growth of the Indian polity and involve no violent departure from the principles or methods of administration hitherto recognsed by authority. What he advocates is a courageous and large step in realising those principles after the war, a step which may be taken, in the judgment of experienced Indian politicians with perfect safety, and which, too long delayed out of regard for vested interests, will be hailed as a

measure of justice and beneficent statesmanship calculated to place this great country, as nearly as practicable at present, on a level of equality with the Self-Governing Dominions and enable her to share adequately in the mighty upheaval of the forces of freedom and national self-realisation which is expected to follow the termination of the war. Those who appreciate justly the value of India to the Empire and would ensure permanency of her connection with it will find in Mr. Natesan's booklet much guidance and necessary knowledge.

Mr. M. K. Gandhi.

I have read Mr. Natesan's booklet with the greatest pleasure. It is a fine *Vade mecum* for the busy politician and worker. Mr. Natesan has provided him with a connected narrative of the movement of self-government in a very attractive and acceptable form. By reproducing in their historical sequence the extracts from official records he has allowed them to speak for themselves. The book is in my opinion a great help to the controversialist and the student of our present day politics who does not care to study musty blue books or has no access to them.

With reference to the joint scheme of Self-Government, though I do not take so much interest in it as our leaders, I feel that from the Government standpoint it must command their attention as a measure which has agitated the public mind as no other has, and I venture to think that there will be no peace in the country until the Scheme has been accepted by the Government.

Mrs. Annie Besant.

With pleasure I recommend this booklet to the Democracy of Great Britain and Ireland, as a succinct and accurate compendium of the demand of India for Self-Government within the Empire. The need for acquiescence in this demand is pressing, for—not to speak of the birthright of freedom belonging to every Nation—the Imperial Parliament has neither the time nor the knowledge to deal properly with Indian affairs. It leaves matters entirely to "the man on the spot," and takes his own account of his proceedings, although, as in Mr. Chamberlain's case, he may state to Parliament the exact opposite of the facts. India wants to manage her own affairs, for she has competent men, full knowledge of conditions, and time to discharge her public business. The control of Parliament, exercised for one day by "a beggarly array of empty benches" at the fag-end of a session, has become a farce and she needs men who will attend to her business as the legislative members of other Nations attend to theirs.

The vital point of the Congress-League Scheme is the control of the purse by the Legislative Council; this is not responsible government but it makes responsible government inevitable. By the control of the purse by the House of Commons England won her freedom, and a similar result will follow here.

I especially recommend to the English reader the section of "the Reconstitution of the Indian Councils," as it will show him why the Minto-

Morley reforms have proved to be infructious, and will explain the Hon. Mr. V. K. Ramanujachariar's contemptuous statement that the Council meetings were "a farce". Out of 104 resolutions proposed in Indian Councils by Indian members, in the Budget debates of 1917, not one was accepted. Under such conditions does the Indian member work. One admires the perseverance and courage of the men who devote their time and their brilliant abilities to this thankless task, and sees alike in their capacity and in their failure to serve their country another argument for Home Rule.

WHAT INDIA WANTS

AUTONOMY WITHIN THE EMPIRE.

SELF-GOVERNMENT: THE OBJECTIVE.

THAT Self-Government is to be India's ideal and the goal which Indians should aspire to has been affirmed over and over again and quite voluntarily in various Royal Proclamations and the utterances of British statesmen and famous Anglo-Indian administrators. A century ago, the Marquis of Hastings wrote in his *Private Journal* (May, 17th, 1818):—

> A time not very remote will arrive when England will, on sound principles of policy, wish to relinquish the domination which she has gradually and unintentionally assumed over this country, and from which she cannot at present recede. In that hour it would be the proudest boast and most delightful reflection that she had used her sovereignty towards enlightening her temporary subjects, so as to enable the native communities to walk along in the paths of justice, and to maintain with probity towards their benefactors that commercial intercourse in which we should then find a solid interest. (P. 361-362, Panini Office Edition). *Quoted in "Towards Home Rule."*

Sir Thomas Munro, whose name is still a household word all over India and whose passionate love for its people is still being commemorated

in some parts of the Madras Presidency in songs and ballads, was one of the earliest to give definite expression to the measures which England should promote for the welfare of the people of India.

In a minute, dated December 31, 1824, he wrote :—

It is not enough that we confer on the natives the benefits of just laws and of moderate taxation, unless we endeavour to raise their character ; but under a foreign Government there are so many causes which tend to depress it, that it is not easy to prevent it from sinking. It is an old observation that he who loses his liberty loses half his virtue. This is true of nations as well as of individuals. To have no property scarcely degrades more in one case than in the other to have property at the disposal of a foreign Government in which we have no share. The enslaved nation loses the privileges of a nation, as the slave does those of a free man ; it loses the privilege of taxing itself, of making its own laws, of having any share in their administration or in the general government of the country. . . . . It is not the arbitrary power of a national sovereign, but subjection to a foreign one, that destroys national character and extinguishes national spirit. When a people cease to have a national character to maintain, they lose the mainspring of whatever is laudable both in public and in private life, and the private sinks with the public character.—(*Indian Spectator*, February 19th, 1899)

But the noble Scotchman was so keen about the great future of the Indian people that he insisted that everything should be done to promote their welfare even if it were to result in the loss of England's control over India. Anticipating

the famous pronouncement of Macaulay, Sir Thomas Munro declared :—

> It would be more desirable that we should be expelled from the country altogether than that the result of our system of government should be such an abasement of a whole people.

Then again as pointed out by the venerable Indian publicist, Dadabhai Naoroji :

> At a time when the Indians were in their educational and political infancy, when they did not and could not understand what their political condition then was or was to be in the future, when they had not uttered any complaints, nor demanded any rights or any definite policy towards themselves, the British nation, of their own accord and pleasure, merely from their own sense of their duty towards the millions of India and to the world, deliberately declared before the world what their policy should be towards the people of India. Nor did the British people do this in any ignorance or want of forethought or without the consideration of all possible consequences of their action. Never was there a debate in both Houses of Parliament more complete and clear, more exhaustive, more deliberately looked at from all points of view, and more calculated for the development of statesmanlike policy and practical good sense. The most crucial point of view—that of political danger or of even the possible loss of India to Britain—was faced with true English manliness; and the British nation, through their Parliament, then settled, adopted, and proclaimed to the world what their policy was to be—viz., the policy of justice and of the advancement of humanity.

THE CHARTER ACT, 1833.

The historic debate referred to is that which took place in the House of Commons and in the Lords in discussing the Charter Act of 1833.

Sir Robert Peel said :—

Sure I am at least that we must approach the consideration of it with a deep feeling, with a strong sense of the responsibility we shall incur, with a strong sense of the moral obligation which imposes it upon us as a duty to promote the improvement of the country and the welfare and well-being of its inhabitants, so far as we can consistently with the safety and security of our dominion and the obligations by which we may be bound. . . . .

He declared further that it was England's duty

to endeavour while we still keep them under British rule, to atone to them for the sufferings they endured, and the wrongs to which they were exposed in being reduced to that rule, and to afford them such advantages and confer on them such benefits as may, in some degree, console them for the loss of their independence. These, sir, are considerations which, whatever may be the anxiety to extend British conquest, and to maintain the rights of British subjects, must indisputably be entertained in a British Parliament.

Mr. Wynn thus stated his conviction :—

He had been convinced, ever since he was first connected with the affairs of India, that the only principle on which that Empire could justly or wisely or advantageously be administered was that of admitting the Natives to a participation in the government, and allowing them to hold every office the duties of which they were competent to discharge.

Mr. Charles Grant rejoiced over the main principle of the Bill and observed :—

If one circumstance more than another could give him satisfaction it was that the main principle of this Bill had received the approbation of the House, and that the House was now legislating for India and the people of India on the great and just principle that in doing so the interests of the people of India should be principally consulted, and that all other interests of wealth, of

commerce, and of revenue, should be as nothing compared with the paramount obligation imposed upon the Legislature of promoting the welfare and prosperity of that great Empire which Providence had placed in our hands.

The Marquis of Lansdowne, speaking on the same subject in the House of Lords, said:

He was sure that their Lordships would feel, as he indeed felt, that their only justification before God and Providence for the great and unprecedented dominion which they exercised in India was in the happiness which they communicated to the subjects under their rule, and in proving to the world at large, and to the inhabitants of Hindustan, that the inheritance of Akbar (the wisest and most beneficent of Mahomedan princes) had not fallen into unworthy or degenerate hands. . . .

His Lordship, after announcing the policy intended to be adopted, concluded:

He was confident that the strength of the Government would be increased by the happiness of the people over whom it presided, and by the attachment of those nations to it.

No educated Indian can ever forget the famous pronouncement made by Lord Macaulay in the House of Commons on this occasion and the magnificent peroration containing his great prophecy about the future of India:

Are we to keep the people of India ignorant in order that we may keep them submissive? Or do we think that we can give them knowledge without awakening ambition? Or do we mean to awaken ambition and to provide it with no legitimate vent? Who will answer any of these questions in the affirmative? Yet every one of them must be answered in the affirmative, by every person who maintains that we ought permanently to exclude the natives from high office. I have no fears. The path of duty is plain before us: and it is also the path of wisdom, of national prosperity, of national honour.

The destinies of our Indian Empire are covered with thick darkness. It is difficult to form any conjecture as to the fate reserved for a State which resembles no other in history, and which forms by itself a separate class of political phenomena. The laws which regulate its growth and its decay are still unknown to us. It may be that the public mind of India may expand under our system till it has outgrown that system; that by good government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government; that, having become instructed in European knowledge, they may, in some future age, demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come I know not. But never will I attempt to avert or to retard it. Whenever it comes, it will be the proudest day in English history. To have found a great people sunk in the lowest depths of slavery and superstition, to have so ruled them as to have made them desirous and capable of all the privileges of citizens, would indeed be a title to glory all our own. The sceptre may pass away from us. Unforeseen accidents may derange our most profound schemes of policy. Victory may be inconstant to our arms. But there are triumphs which are followed by no reverse. There is an empire exempt from all natural causes of decay. Those triumphs are the pacific triumphs of reason over barbarism; that empire is the imperishable empire of our arts and our morals, our literature and our laws.

This eloquent plea of Macaulay was in favour of "that wise, that benevolent, and that noble clause" 87, of the Charter Act of 1833, which declared "that *no native of the said territories nor any natural born subject of His Majesty resident therein, shall, by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office, or employment under the Company.*"

The Court of Directors, in forwarding the Act of 1833 to the East India Company, accompanied the same with a remarkable despatch in which they observed regarding clause 87 :

> It is provided that no person by reason of his birth, creed, or colour, shall be disqualified from holding any office in our service. . . . .
>
> It is fitting that this important enactment should be understood in order that its full spirit and intention may be transfused through our whole system of administration.
>
> But the meaning of the enactment we take to be that there shall be no governing caste in British India ; that whatever other tests of qualification may be adopted, distinctions of race or religion shall not be of the number. That no subject of the King, whether of Indian or British or mixed descent, shall be excluded either from the posts usually conferred on our uncovenanted servants in India, or from the covenanted service itself, provided he be otherwise eligible consistently with the rules and agreeably to the conditions observed and exacted in the one case and in the other.

ACT OF 1853.

It will thus be seen that the question of India's future was discussed thoroughly in all its bearings, "political, imperial, and social," and clause 87 enacted by the British Parliament—a clause "worthy of the righteousness, justice, and noble instincts of the British people in the true British spirit." When in 1853, once again, the revision of the Company's Charter came up in the Commons, in discussing its provisions many

members bewailed that the important provision of the Act of 1833 had not been given effect to. The opportunity, therefore, was fully availed of to "emphatically insist" that the British people and the British Parliament should be no party to the "unfaithfulness" of reducing a Parliamentary enactment to a "dead letter," a "sham and a delusion."

Listen to the outburst of Mr. John Bright. Speaking on June 3rd, 1853, he said :—

Another subject requiring close attention on the part of Parliament was the employment of the Natives of India in the service of the Government. The right hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Macaulay), proposing the India Bill of 1833 had dwelt on one of its clauses, which provided that neither colour nor caste nor religion nor place of birth should be a bar to the employment of persons by the Government; whereas, as a matter of fact, from that time to this, no person in India had been so employed who might not have been equally employed before that clause was enacted; and from the statement of the right hon. gentleman, the President of the Board of Control, that it was proposed to keep up the Covenanted Service system, it was clear that this most objectionable and most offensive state of things was to continue. Mr. Cameron, a gentleman thoroughly versed in the subject, as fourth Member of Council in India, President of the Indian Law Commission, and of the Council of Education for Bengal—what did he say on

this point? He said: 'The Statute of 1833 made the Natives of India eligible to all offices under the Company. But during the twenty years that have since elapsed not one of the Natives has been appointed to any offices except such as they were eligible to before the Statute.'

Mr. J. G. Phillimore sounded a note of warning which is worth recalling:—

He also feared that the Bill would prove delusive, and that although it professed to do justice to the Natives the "spirit of monopoly would still blight the hopes and break the spirits of the Indian people. While such a state of things continued, India would be attached to this country by no bond of affection," but would be retained by the power of the Army and the terror of the sword. He implored of the Committee "not to allow such an Empire to be governed in the miserable spirit of monopoly and exclusion."

Five years later, in moving for leave to bring in the (first) Bill for the better Government of India, Viscount Palmerston observed:

It is indeed remarkable that those regions, in which science and art may be said to have first dawned upon mankind, should now be subject to the rule of a people inhabiting islands which at a time, when these eastern regions enjoyed as high a civilization and as great prosperity as that age could offer, were in a state of utter barbarism,

and he wound up his great speech with the following significant warning:

I trust that Parliament will feel that great power is not given to nations without corresponding duties to be performed. We have, by an almost miraculous train of events, been entrusted with the care of the destinies of 150 or 160 millions of men—with the government, direct-

ly or indirectly, of a vast empire larger in extent than the whole face of Europe, putting the Russian empire out of the question. That is a task which involves great responsibility. Do not imagine that it is the intention of Providence that England should possess that vast empire, and that we should have in our hand the destinies of that vast multitude of men, simply that we may send out to India the sons of gentlemen or of the middling classes to make a decent fortune to live on. That power has been entrusted to us for other and better purposes; and, without pointing to anything particular, I think it is the duty of this nation to use it in such a manner as to promote, as far as they can, the instruction, the enlightenment, and the civilization of those great populations which are now subject to our rule.

ROYAL PROCLAMATIONS.

Such have been the noble efforts made in the British Parliament from time to time to ensure that under the administration of the East India Company, the interests of the people were properly safeguarded and nothing done to check the growth of their legitimate ambition or their political advancement. When at the end of the great Mutiny the rule (many call it the misrule) of the Company was put an end to, and the Government of India transferred directly to the Crown, and the Proclamation of 1858 issued to the Princes and Peoples of India, the joy of the people knew no bounds, for the event marked the turning point in the history of British rule in India and the famous Proclamation of Queen Victoria

gave further solemnity to the sacred character of the promise contained in the Charter Act of 1833. "*We hold ourselves*," proclaimed the noble Queen, "*bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and these obligations by the blessing of Almighty God we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil*;" and it is interesting at this distance of time to recall to our memory how the good Queen directed her Minister to issue the great Proclamation, bearing in mind "that it is a female Sovereign who speaks to more than a hundred millions of her eastern people on assuming the direct government over them and, after a bloody war *giving them pledges which her future reign is to redeem*." And in explaining the principles of her Government Her Majesty was justly anxious that the document besides "breathing a feeling of generosity, benevolence and religious toleration," must also "point out *the privileges which the Indians will receive in being placed on an equality with the subjects of the British Crown*."

On the 1st of January 1877, at the great Delhi Assemblage held to proclaim the assumption of the title of Empress of India by Queen Victoria, Lord Lytton, the then Viceroy, said :—

But you, the natives of India, whatever your race and whatever your creed, have a recognised claim to share largely with your English fellow-subjects, according to your capacity for the task, in the administration of the country you inhabit. This claim is founded on the highest justice. It has been repeatedly affirmed by British and Indian statesmen and by the legislation of the Imperial Parliament. It is recognised by the Government of India as binding on its honour and consistent with all the aims of its policy.

Three months later the same Viceroy, in his rôle as Chancellor of the Calcutta University, observed that "the Proclamation of the Queen contained solemn pledges spontaneously given, and founded upon the highest justice."

In 1887, in reply to an address of congratulation voted by the Municipal Corporation of the City of Bombay on the occasion of the Jubilee, the Queen Empress said: "It has always been and will continue to be my earnest desire that the principles of that Proclamation should be unswervingly maintained."

Attention may also be drawn to two other notable royal pronouncements. On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the transfer of the Government of India to the Crown, King Edward VII in his Proclamation to the Princes and Peoples of India, which was read by H. E. the Viceroy (the late Earl Minto) in Durbar, at Jodhpur, on the 2nd November, 1908, said :—

Steps are being continuously taken towards obliterating distinctions of race as the test for access to posts of public authority and power. In this path I confidently expect and intend the progress henceforward to be steadfast and sure, as education spreads, experience ripens and the lessons of responsibility are well learned by the keen intelligence and apt capabilities of India.

From the first, the principle of representative institutions began to be gradually introduced, and the time has come when, in the judgment of my Viceroy and Governor-General and others of my counsellors, that principle may be prudently extended. Important classes among you, representing ideas that have been fostered and encouraged by British rule, claim equality of citizenship, and a greater share in legislation and government. The politic satisfaction of such a claim will strengthen, not impair, existing authority and power.

Almost the first act of H. M. King George V., on ascending the Throne, was to send the following message to his Indian subjects :—

Queen Victoria, of revered memory, addressed her Indian subjects and the heads of Feudatory States when she assumed the direct government in 1858, and her august son, my father, of honoured and beloved name, commemorated the same most notable event in his Address to you some fifty years later. These are the Charters of the noble and benignant spirit of Imperial rule, and by that spirit in all my time to come I will faithfully abide.

To use His Majesty's own words, it was his wish not only "to strengthen the old ties but to create new ones, and so, please God, secure a better understanding and a closer union between the Mother-country and her Indian Empire, to break down prejudice, to dispel misapprehension, and to foster sympathy and brotherhood." His

Imperial Majesty's visit to India and the solemn ceremony of His Coronation at Delhi, were, to use the words of the official historian, "really an emphatic announcement, *an announcement that India is an equal and integral part of the British Empire.*"

The event was one of tremendous importance in the history of the Empire. Political aspirations were lifted to a higher plane, patriotism was broadened and intensified, a new pride arose in the heritage of the Empire, and with it a stronger feeling of mutual respect and better social relationship between the natives of India and the natives of England, to all of whom the King was common, irrespective of religion, race or colour.

India is now assured, without a shadow of doubt, of its part in the great Imperial Commonwealth and of the inherent sympathy and high intentions of the rule which Their Majesties personify. It knows without doubt that it is no longer a mere subordinate and conquered land, but that it is bound by ties of the closest affection and heartfelt allegiance to a monarch who, amid all the multifarious interests and absorbing activities of his great position, has ever watched its welfare with the deepest interest and sought to give it an equal place in the dominions of the Empire; a Sovereign, too, who lives for unity, in the certain knowledge that the brotherhood of his world-wide dominion can only be for the benefit of its members and for the blessing and advantage of untold millions of the human race.—(*The Historical Record of the Imperial Visit to India*, p. 17, 19-20.)

It will thus be seen that while Queen Victoria was anxious that the Proclamation issued in her own name to the Princes and Peoples of India should "point out the privileges which

the Indians will receive in being placed on an equality with the subjects of the British Crown,' her son and her grandson solemnly confirmed the ideal set by her to the people of India.

VIEWS OF BRITISH & ANGLO-INDIAN STATESMEN.

The noble policy laid down by the British Parliament and sanctified by the Proclamation of Queen Victoria, pledged to be followed by her successors, has been from time to time reiterated by a succession of great British statesmen and Anglo-Indian administrators.

Who does not remember the pronouncement of that great and noble Englishman, the Rt. Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, who toiled for the people of India for thirty long years in various capacities? In his evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1833 he urged among other things that the first object of the rulers must be "to raise the natives by education and public trust to a level with their present rulers." Seventeen years later he wrote:—

I conceive that the administration of all the departments of a great country by a small number of foreign visitors, in a state of isolation produced by a difference in religion, ideas, and manners, which cuts them off from all intimate communion with the people, can never be contemplated as a permanent state of things. I conceive also that the progress of education among the natives renders such a scheme impracticable, even if it

were otherwise free from objection. It might, perhaps, have once been possible to have retained the natives in a subordinate condition (at the expense of national justice and honour) by studiously repressing their spirit and discouraging their progress in knowledge; but we are now doing our best to raise them in all mental qualities to a level with ourselves, and to instil into them the liberal opinions in government and policy which have long prevailed in this country, and it is vain to endeavour to rule them on principles only suited to a slavish and ignorant population.

Sir Stafford Northcote (Lord Iddesleigh), speaking in the House of Commons in 1867 as Secretary of State for India, said:

The English Government must necessarily labour under great disadvantages, *and we should endeavour as far as possible to develop the system of Native Government, to bring out Native talent and statesmanship, and to enlist in the cause of Government all that was great and good in them.* Nothing could be more wonderful than our Empire in India; but we ought to consider on what conditions we hold it and how our predecessors held it. The greatness of the Mogul Empire depended on the liberal policy that was pursued by men like the great Emperor Akbar and his successors availing themselves of Hindu talent and assistance, and identifying themselves as far as possible with the people of the country. They ought to take a lesson from such circumstances. *If they were to do their duty towards India they could only discharge that duty by obtaining assistance and counsel of all who are great and good in that country.* It would be absurd in them to say that there was not a large fund of statesmanship and ability in the Indian character. They really must not be too proud. They were always ready to speak of the English Government as so infinitely superior to anything in the way of Indian Government. But if the Natives of India were disposed to be equally critical, it would be possible for them to find out weak places in the harness of the English administration.

Sir John Malcolm, another famous Anglo-Indian, respected and revered like Mountstuart Elphinstone, sounded the note of warning when he said:

We are not warranted by the history of India, nor indeed by that of any other nation in the world, in reckoning upon the possibility of preserving an Empire of such a magnitude by a system which excludes, as ours does, the natives from every station of high rank and honourable ambition. . . . If we do not use the knowledge which we impart, it will be employed against us. . . . If these plans are not associated with the creation of duties that will employ the minds which we enlighten, we shall only prepare elements that will hasten the destruction of our Empire. The moral evil to us does not thus stand alone. It carries with it its Nemesis, the seeds of the destruction of the Empire itself.

Sir John Lawrence in 1864 said:

The people of India are quite capable of administering their own affairs, and the municipal feeling is deeply rooted in them. The village communities, each of which is a little republic, are the most abiding of Indian institutions. Holding the position we do in India, every view of duty and policy should induce us to leave as much as possible of the business of the country to be done by the people.

And Mr. Gladstone, "who loved Liberty in his old age even more fully than he loved her in his youth," declared:

I hold that the capital agent in determining finally the question whether our power in India is or is not to continue, will be the will of the two hundred and forty millions of people who inhabit India. The question who shall have Supreme Rule in India is, by the laws of right, an Indian question; and those laws of right are

from day to day growing into laws of fact. Our title to be there depends on a first condition, that our being there is profitable to the Indian nations; and on a second condition, that we can make them see and understand it to be profitable.

Sir William Wilson Hunter pointed out:

I do not believe that a people numbering one-sixth of the whole inhabitants of the globe, and whose aspirations have been nourished from their earliest youth on the strong food of English liberty, can be permanently denied a voice in the government of the country.

Lord Salisbury has said:

But it would be a great evil if the result of our dominion was that the Natives of India who were capable of government should be absolutely and hopelessly excluded from such a career.

This is what Lord Hartington said in 1883:

It is not wise to educate the people of India, to introduce among them your civilisation and your progress and your literature, and at the same time to tell them that they shall never have any chance of taking any part or share in the administration of the affairs of their country, except by getting rid, in the first instance, of their European rulers. Surely it would not be wise to tell a patriotic native of India of that.

Sir Richard Temple, an Anglo-Indian never regarded as a friend of India, expressed his opinion:—

For all that it must be remembered that the elective principle is essential to that political training which every stable government (like that of the British in India) must desire to see possessed by its subjects. . . . Public spirit cannot be created without entrusting the people with a part of their own public business, a part limited at first, but increasing as their fitness shall grow. Even

if political risks should accrue, they must be borne in performing the duty which the British Government owes to the people of India. In that country, a trustful policy will be found a wise one, and that which is sound morally will prove to be the safest politically.

The only true and just position which Great Britain ought to adopt towards India was clearly perceived and frankly acknowledged by one of the greatest of Indian Viceroys—Lord Ripon—who, in addressing the University of Bombay, in 1894, expressed himself as follows:—

I am very strongly impressed with the conviction that the spread of education, and especially of Western culture, carried on as it is under the auspices of this and the other Indian universities, imposes new and special difficulties upon the Government of this country. It seems to me, I must confess, that it is little short of folly that we should throw open to increasing numbers the rich stores of Western learning; that we should inspire them with European ideas, and bring them into the closest contact with English thought; and then that we should, as it were, pay no heed to the growth of those aspirations which we have ourselves called forth. To my mind one of the most important, if it be also one of the most difficult, problems of the Indian Government in these days is, how to afford such satisfaction to those aspirations and to those ambitions as may render the men who are animated by them the hearty advocates and the loyal supporters of the British Government.

A few years later, Lord Cromer, who was Lord Ripon's Finance Minister and one of the most reputed of Britain's Pro-Consuls, placed on record the following opinion:—

It is only what ought to be expected by every thoughtful man, that, after fifty years of free press and thirty

years of expanding education, with European ideas flowing into the country on every side, and old indigenous customs, habits, and prejudices breaking down, changes should be taking place in the thoughts, the desires, and the aims of the intelligent and educated men of the country, which no wise and cautious Government can afford to disregard, and to which they must gradually adapt their system of administration if they do not wish to see it shattered by forces which they have themselves called into being, but which they have failed to guide and control.

More notable still was the pronouncement made to the Elphinstonians of Bombay by Sir William Lee-Warner :—

It is no narrow principle of a paternal Government or a rule for the benefit of the ruler which sent forth the Roman with this poet's sailing orders,

'*Tu regere imperio populos Romane memento,*' or which fostered differences as aiding the central authority, *Divide et impera.* Its aim is less to govern than to call forth the progressive capacity and to teach self-government. It desires to lift up the lower ranks of society and the subject to the pedestal of the ruler. 'Humanity,' and 'Heaven's light our guide,' are its watchwords, and they are embodied in your *Magna Charta*, the Queen's Proclamation, issued by the ruler whose authority had just been defied and restored by the sword . . . . . . There are three supreme ideas of mankind, the family, the nation and humanity. The Hindu and the Greek ruler thought of the first, the Roman Empire of the second ; but the British nation accepts the last and highest as its ruling idea. . . . . I venture to point out to you that from God's nature the British nation has learnt the grand idea of humanity, and that the legislation and administration of India under the Queen bears testimony to Her Majesty's desire to recognize a progressive future as before all those committed to her care. The protection of the weak, equality in the eye of the law, justice, and a common participation in the benefits and when the time comes,

in the task of good government are at least the aims which the British Government sets before it.

And if further evidence were needed to show how truly noble was the ideal of the older generation of Anglo-Indian administrators, we have only to recall to our memory the famous letter addressed to the late Mr. Gokhale, in 1905, by Mr. Hodgson Pratt:—

"Fifty years ago," writes Mr. Pratt, who in those days was a member of the Bengal Civil Service, "while India was still under the Government of the East India Company, it was considered both just and wise to introduce measures for national education on a liberal scale, with adequate provision of schools, colleges, and universities. This event was hailed with lively satisfaction by the native population as heralding a new era of social progress, and as satisfying the active intelligence of the Hindus. Now it must be observed that the character of the teaching thus inaugurated by Englishmen would necessarily reflect the ideals which have for centuries prevailed among them. In other words, Indian youths would be brought up to admire our doctrines of political liberty, popular rights, and national independence; nor could it ever have been supposed that these lessons would fall upon deaf ears and cold hearts. On the contrary, the inevitable result of such teaching was clearly perceived by the Government of those days, and was regarded in a generous spirit. In support of this assertion I may mention that at the time of the inauguration of these measures I accompanied the then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal (Sir Frederick Halliday) on one of his winter tours through the province. Naturally, he called the attention of those who attended the public meetings held by him to the new education policy, and he always took occasion to declare that the schools would promote one of the leading purposes of British rule, *which was to prepare the people for self-government*. It certainly was not supposed that at any subse-

quent time a policy would be adopted, which would disappoint the legitimate hopes thus created."

ENGLISH EDUCATION AND INDIAN ASPIRATIONS.

With such a lofty ideal of the political destiny of India placed before them, fed upon the writings of Milton and Burke and Mill, with their minds fully stored with the great history of the struggles for constitutional freedom and liberty in England and other Western countries, and above all ever inspired by the higher ideals of English life and character, is it a matter for wonder, or in any way unnatural, that educated India has been steadily gazing at the goal of Self-Government? The leaven had begun to work; the national consciousness of the people began first to manifest itself when systematic attempts were made to defeat, to nullify, to render into a farce and a sham Clause 87 of the Charter Act of 1833. Requests and remonstrances for the fulfilment of the pledge contained therein proved vain, and great was the outcry not only in Bengal but throughout the country when a deliberate attempt was made to frame a law that candidates for the Indian Civil Service should not be more than 19 to 21 years of age at the time of examination, a period specially chosen to make it impossible for young Indians to go over to England and success-

fully compete there. Referring to the still unfulfilled and unredeemed Clause 87 of the Charter Act of 1833, Lord Lytton had observed in a confidential minute :—

No sooner was the Act passed than the Government began to devise means for practically evading the fulfilment of it. . . . . We all know that these claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled. We have had to choose between prohibiting them and cheating them, and we have chosen the least straightforward course.

He added :—

Since I am writing confidentially, I do not hesitate to say that both the Governments of England and of India appear to me up to the present moment unable to answer satisfactorily the charge of having taken every means in their power of breaking to the heart the words of promise they had uttered to the ear.

Speaking on the same subject in the House of Lords on March 11, 1869, the Duke of Argyll avowed frankly :—

With regard, however, to the employment of natives in the government of their country, in the Covenanted Service, formerly of the Company and now of the Crown, I must say that we have not fulfilled our duty, or the promises and engagements which we have made.

LORD LYTTON'S POLICY.

The first effective obstruction to Indians

being placed "on an equality with the subjects of the British Crown," as promised by Queen Victoria was thus accomplished. The Vernacular Press Act of Lord Lytton and the remission of the Indian cotton duties to propitiate the greed of Lancashire roused the feelings of the people to a still greater degree. Political agitation, quite on English lines, naturally followed and educated Indians, though few in numbers, began to talk of liberty and self-government. And as out of evil cometh good, fortunately for India, it proved the beginning of the new national awakening which has been destined to play no mean part in the political development of the country. This national feeling still further gained in solidarity by the great religio-social movements like the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society, the Ramakrishna Mission and other organisations.

INDIA UNDER LORD RIPON.

While India was thus in a state of ferment, religious, social and political, fortunately for it, on the heels of the exceedingly unpopular Viceroy Lord Lytton, came Lord Ripon. That noble Viceroy, whose honoured name will ever be writ large in

the pages of Indian history, freed the Vernacular Press from the fetters to which it had been subjected and realising the sacred character of the promises and pledges that had been made to the people of India by Her Majesty and her duly constituted representatives, formulated boldly his policy of Local Self-Government and thereby sought in true British spirit to lay the foundations of representative institutions in India. But he was not content with doing that only. He made also a brave and honourable attempt to amend the criminal law of the country so as to place the European and the Indian on an equal footing in the matter of trials and thus tried to redeem another sacred promise of Her Majesty. Anglo-India, official and non-official, combined together to thwart the Viceroy in his noble efforts and we have it on authority that a very serious attempt was made with the connivance of the officials to forcibly deport Lord Ripon out of the country. But though his attempt to make the Ilbert Bill the law of the land failed and a compromise was effected by which the principle of the Bill was abandoned, Lord Ripon's regime gave a new impetus to the political life of the country. The unique demonstrations held all over

the country to bid him farewell may justly be termed a landmark in Indian history. When Lord Ripon left the shores of India the country was not in its normal mood. The tension between the Indian and European communities caused by the Ilbert Bill agitation was still being felt and when the diplomatic Lord Dufferin assumed the Viceroyalty "the fire was still smouldering." The cry of political liberty and political equality raised during the reactionary regime of Lord Lytton and re-enforced in volume and vigour by the Anglo-Indian opposition to Lord Ripon's benevolent attempts to raise the status and privileges of Indians gained more and more strength in the early years of Lord Dufferin's administration and, we have it on indisputable authority, that the discontent that was smouldering was likely to produce danger, "tremendous in the immediate future."

THE FOUNDATION OF THE CONGRESS.

It was just at this juncture that a distinguished Indian Civilian who loved the people of India as well as his sovereign realised that the time was come to gather the forces that were then in operation and direct them into one channel. In the words of Allan Octavian Hume, whose memory

will ever be cherished by the millions of this land with gratitude,

no choice was left to those who gave the primary impetus to the movement. The ferment, the creation of Western ideas, education, invention and appliances, was at work with a rapidly increasing intensity, and it became of paramount importance to find for its products an overt and constitutional channel for discharge, instead of leaving them to fester as they had already commenced to do, under the surface.

Thus was laid the foundation of the great Indian National Congress. The movement was expressly intended

to foster a wider altruism and a more genuine public spirit, by concentrating the most strenuous efforts on great national problems, and diminishing the absorption in local or purely selfish interests—to educate all who took part in it, not merely in the arts of public speaking and debate, developing the faculty of thinking out clearly opinions, and expressing them lucidly to others, not merely in habits of accuracy and research, but also in the practice of self-control, moderation and willingness to give and take—to educate them in fact into what has been described as a genuine Parliamentary frame of mind—to familiarize the country with the methods and working of representative institutions on a large scale, and thus, as this familiarity grew, to demonstrate to the Government and people of England that India was already ripe for some measure of those institutions to which the entire intelligence of the country so earnestly aspires.*

The notification under which in 1885 the first session of the Indian National Congress was called into existence clearly stated that one of the objects of the future assembly was " indirectly *to form the*

* Page 65. Life of *Allan Octavian Hume* by Sir William Wedderburn. G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras.

germ of an Indian parliament which, if properly conducted, will constitute in a few years an unanswerable reply to the assertion that India is still wholly unfit for any form of representative institutions."

In the second Congress the question of representative institutions for India was again debated and the Congress recorded its "fixed conviction that the introduction of representative institutions will prove one of the most important practical steps towards the amelioration of the condition of the people."

Thenceforward the question of representative institutions was discussed in some shape or other, at almost every session of the Congress, and in the words of one of the great orators of the Congress:

> We unfurl the banner of the Congress, and upon it are written, in characters of glittering gold, which none may efface, the great words of this Resolution: 'Representative Institutions for India.'

When the movement entered the second decade of its life more emphatic expression was given to the hopes and aspirations of the people "*to realise the dream of a united and federated India.*"

THE CURZONIAN REGIME.

After this period the Congress had to enter on

a new stage of its activities. Lord Curzon came out as Viceroy of India with a flourish of trumpets about his love of India and his sympathy with its aims and aspirations. But the first year of his reign was marked by the reactionary policy of the Calcutta Municipal Act and an uneasy feeling crept into the minds of many people.

But the faith of the Congress was not yet shaken. It received with great enthusiasm a letter from Mr. W. S. Caine who had laboured not a little for the good of the people of India, in which he said of the Indian people:

> My belief in their future as a great self-governing portion of the British Empire, and my conviction of their natural capacity for self-government deepens and strengthens every year.

The President of the Congress, Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt, who had just then retired from the Indian Civil Service after a long and honourable record of useful work and had acquired a reputation as a great scholar and historian, appealed to the authorities to remember that India, while loyal to the British rule sought "a large measure of self-government" and a "position among the modern nations of the earth."

One more year of the Curzonian regime and we find echoes of the cry :—

But the times have changed, and the alien Government now ruling over us has entirely different ideas and constitutions. The English Government, though democratic at home, is imperialistic and bureaucratic here.

It is a significant commentary on Lord Curzon's statesmanship that he began his policy of reaction and repression and his many attempts to smother the growing ambitions of the people of India just at a time when a small Asiatic power had inflicted a crushing blow on Russia—the Colossus of Europe. When the news of the fall of Port Arthur was flashed forth, everywhere the feeling was that the world had witnessed the birth of a powerful Asiatic nation in a day. "The child of the world's age had proved to be its most remarkable offspring." Triumphant Japan stood "revealed in the full glare of a new light no longer in leading strings but capable of being, and fully determined to be, a dominant factor in Eastern Asia—a power to be reckoned with in any future political combination affecting the countries which faced the rising sun." The immediate and inevitable effect of the Japanese victory was to rouse the national self-respect of all the Eastern peoples and the strong belief in the capacities of Orientals to successfully adopt and work modern political

institutions. The great leviathan China, roused to activity by the splendour of her neighbour, began moving in the direction of a liberal Government. In Persia, the Shah decided on the formation of a National Council to deliberate on all important affairs of State. While an absolute monarch like the Shah was progressing with the spirit of the times, nearer home, on the borders of India, the Amir of Afghanistan called into existence a "consultative assembly" with a view to enable the people to associate themselves with the work of the Government. In India, however, Lord Curzon sitting safely in the citadel of Bureaucracy began talking derisively of the educated classes of India. He tried to arrest the progress of education, "to set back the dial of local self-government," to interpret the Queen's Proclamation in a "pettifogging spirit" and, in the words of Dr. R. B. Ghose, to sacrifice the interests of the Indian people in order to conciliate English exploiters and administrators and "to humiliate not only His Majesty's Indian subjects but also the great ruling Chiefs."* Above all by his attempt to break up the unity

* Page 38. Presidenital Address, Surat Congress: *Speeches and Writings of Dr. Rash Behari Ghose*, G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras.

and the solidarity of the Bengalee speaking people, he "set Bengal in a blaze."

As the Hon. Mr. Gokhale pointed out:—

"To Lord Curzon India was a country where the Englishman was to monopolize for all time all power and talk all the while of duty. The Indian's only business was to be governed, and it was a sacrilege on his part to have any other aspiration. In his scheme of things there was no room for the educated classes of the country; and having failed to amuse them for any length of time by an empty show of taking them into his confidence, he prodceeded in the end to repress them."*

He created in the Indian mind a profound feeling of distrust and everything he did was calculated to convince the people more than ever that he was determined to prevent the onward march of the Indian people and keep them away, if not altogether divert them, from the path of Self-Government. Mr. Henry Nevinson, who made a tour in India during the period of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty and who availed himself of every opportunity to study the

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* **Page 809. Presidential Address, Benares Congress:** ***Speeches of Gopal Krishna Gokhale.*** **G, A. Natesan & Co., Madras.**

genesis of the Indian unrest, points out in his remarkable book on the "New Spirit in India": "Although no hard-and-fast line can be drawn in history, the arrival of Lord Curzon as Viceroy on December 30, 1898 marks a fully strong and natural division." No doubt between the year of the assumption of the direct Government of India by the Queen and the period commencing with the Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon, there was a constant attempt on the part of the bureaucracy to go backwards. But there were occasionally noble efforts made to move forwards also. Lord Curzon however it was who "set back the hand of the clock" and adopted a complete reactionary and retrograde policy. The support that he had from the Bureaucracy and the Conservative press at Home "gave a rude shock to the popular mind and the discontent which had long been brewing in the country burst into a flame." And so in 1905 everybody saw clearly "the beginning of the extraordinary ferment in Indian public life which has continued unabated to this day. Every responsible Indian politician warned the authorities of the serious consequences that were resulting from their reckless attitude and of the growing numbers of a class of people

" who have lost all confidence in the good faith of Government and have persuaded themselves that England means to treat India as a mere pawn in her military and diplomatic enterprises, a close preserve for the classes and a happy hunting ground for the white adventurer." "In the general wreck of moderation and faith that followed," boycott of everything foreign was preached to the people and Swaraj held up as the goal of Indian aspirations. Quite "a radical and serious change had come over the spirit of the people." It was at this juncture that the Congress met in the sacred city of Benares under the presidency of one of the greatest Indians of modern times, Gopal Krishna Gokhale. In vain did he make an appeal in his presidential address to the authorities to give a right turn to the feeling of the people and make it a source of strength and not of weakness to the Empire :

> **What the country needs at this moment above everything else is a Government, national in spirit, even though it may be foreign in personnel—a Government that will enable us to feel that *our* interests are the first consideration with it, and that *our* wishes and opinions are to it a matter of some account.**

But Lord Curzon pursued his policy of reaction and repression. The patience of the people was tried sorely.

It looked as if the New Party had completely triumphed. What they were anxious for was repression, persecution and prosecution, all calculated to make the people lose faith in British rule; and Sir Bampfylde Fuller, apt pupil of Lord Curzon, and some of his officers were constantly supplying arguments to the advocates of the doctrine of Swaraj. When the Congress met in Calcutta in 1906 "it was barely saved from a wreck by the reverence-compelling presence of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji."

MR. DADABHAI'S IDEAL OF SWARAJ.

Dadabhai who throughout his life had been pleading for *British Spirit* and *British Justice* and denouncing everything *un-British* was emphatic in his claim that Indians should be in India what Englishmen were in their country. According to him there was only one remedy for the unrest and for the economic evil which was at the root of Indian poverty. "*The whole matter can be comprised in one word, Self-Government, or Swaraj, like that of the United Kingdom or the Colonies.*" As to when a beginning should be made to enable the people to automatically develop full Self-Government, he gave the unhesitating answer: "*Not only has the time fully arrived, but it had arrived long past.*"

Under his presidency the Congress passed the following Resolution :—

That this Congress is of opinion that the system of Government obtaining in the Self-Governing British Colonies should be extended to India, and that, as steps leading to it, it urges that the following reforms should be immediately carried out:

(*a*) All examinations held in England only should be simultaneously held in India and in England, and that all higher appointments which are made in India should be by competitive examination only.

(*b*) The adequate representation of Indians in the Council of the Secretary of State and the Executive Councils of the Viceroy, and of the Governors of Madras and Bombay.

(*c*) The expansion of the Supreme and Provincial Legislative Councils, allowing a larger and truly effective representation of the people and a larger control over the financial and executive administration of the country.

(*d*) The powers of Local and Municipal bodies should be extended and official control over them should not be more than what is exercised by the Local Government Board in England over similar bodies.

Here is the message of India's Grand Old Man :

Self-Government is the only and chief remedy. In Self-Government lie our hope, strength and greatness. . . . I do not know what good fortune may be in store for me during the short period that may be left to me and if I can leave a word of affection and devotion for my country and countrymen I say: Be united, persevere, and achieve Self-Government, so that the millions now perishing by poverty, famine and plague, and the scores of millions that are starving on scanty subsistence may be saved, and India may once more occupy her proud position of yore among the greatest and civilised Nations of the World.*

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* Page 96. Presidential Address, Calcutta Congress : *Dadabhai Naoroji's Speeches and Writings.*

"Self-Government like that of the United Kingdom or that of the Colonies," that is what India should demand and for achieving it, she should strive her best. The whole country was ringing with that cry and that was the only cry for the time being.

Some prominent members of the new party became every day more clamorous and tried to form a political programme of their own in some respects inconsistent with the traditional aims and methods of the Congress movement. Nothing short of the adoption of a universal boycott and of Swaraj or unrestricted Self-Government would satisfy them. And if certain extremists had been driven to the position of proclaiming complete Swaraj, the excuse they could urge was that they had been forced to do so by the extremely repressive measures adopted by the bureaucracy. Enraged by official persecution in various forms, and distrusting the motives of the many moderate leaders who appealed to the members of the new party not to lose faith in constitutional methods of agitation nor in the higher purposes of British rule as enunciated by successive sovereigns and their accredited statesmen and administrators

they made a desperate attempt to capture the Congress and adopt resolutions which might alter the course and policy the Congress had hitherto adopted. But thoughtful Indian publicists who had for years been working constitutionally towards the objective of Self-Government on Colonial lines rallied their forces and the result was the unfortunate, yet memorable struggle at Surat. The time was come to definitely lay down in writing the objective of the Congress movement and the Convention at Surat which was attended by over 900 delegates definitely accepted it as the fundamental creed of the movement :—

That the attainment by India of Self-Government similar to that enjoyed by the Self-Governing members of the British Empire, and participation by her in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with those members is the goal of our political aspirations.

The creed of the Congress had once for all been settled and its constitution carefully drawn up but the work of the moderates was by no means rendered easy and smooth. About this time it was fairly well-known that Lord Minto who found himself in a sea of troubles had, with the sagacity of the statesman, seen the necessity for some immediate changes and reforms in the

administration of the State and in no wise deterred by outbursts of anarchical crimes and outrages had strongly pressed on the attention of Lord Morley, the Secretary of State for India, the need for taking some immediate steps in the direction of associating the people with the government of the country. Of Lord Morley himself great expectations had been raised, and though he had been forced to give his sanction to some repressive laws and unjust deportations yet responsible Indian politicians looked up to him, "the reverent student of Burke, the disciple of Mill, the friend and biographer of Gladstone," to courageously apply his liberal principles to the administration of India. Eminent Indians like Dr. Rash Behari Ghose rejoiced that Mr. Morley was engaged "in digging the grave of the bureaucracy"; indeed "we can almost hear the thud of the spade and the music, yes, the music of the knell." Dr. Ghose counselled his countrymen to be of good cheer. "For lo! the winter is almost past, the rain is over and gone, and the flowers begin to appear on the earth." The famous Minto-Morley Reforms were announced. "The clouds which had darkened the political sky" for a long

time and which every one had watched "so long with fear and trembling had after all begun to dissolve in rain." Thanks to Lords Morley and Minto, the golden moment had been seized, and a new and a long wished-for policy of conciliation had been adopted. When, therefore, the Congress which in the previous year had broken up at Surat reassembled at Madras, there was a general wave of satisfaction that an important chapter had been opened in the history of the relations between Great Britain and India. The President of the Congress rejoiced

that the people of India will now be associated with the Government in the daily and hourly administration of their affairs. A great step forward has thus been taken in the grant of representative government for which the Congress had been crying for years. In a word we shall now have something like a constitutional government in the place of an autocratic and irresponsible administration.

He looked forward also *to a time "when an exultant President of the Indian National Congress will be able to announce to a united people, amid universal rejoicing, the extension to India of the Colonial type of Government."*

INDIAN REFORMS AND THE BUREAUCRACY.

But the joy of the people was destined to be short-lived. The task of framing the regulations to give effect to the reform proposals was entrusted to the bureaucracy, and as if to be reven-

ged on the public which had fought for the reforms, it virtually manacled and wrecked them. The method and manner in which the regulations and rules had been framed and worked which have virtually made the non-official members in the Legislative Councils impotent and driven many of them to despair will be described more fully when dealing with the problem of the reconstitution of the Indian Councils. Lord Minto, the noble Viceroy who did his best for India in the most trying situation was succeeded by Lord Hardinge and the Congress which met at Calcutta in 1911, "met in the full joy of the reunited Bengalees whose long suffering had been crowned with triumph, and who had heard the Partition of Bengal annulled by the King Emperor's own lips in the great Coronation Durbar at Delhi." More important still was the publication of the Despatch and the correspondence that passed between the Government of India and the Secretary of State on the administrative changes announced by H. M. The King Emperor and the recognition of the necessity of complete provincial autonomy.

PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY.

The memorable passage in the Despatch laid

down in clear and emphatic terms the ideal to be followed :—

It is certain that, in the course of time, the just demands of Indians for a large share in the government of the country will have to be satisfied, and the question will be how this devolution of power can be conceded without impairing the supreme authority of the Governor-General in Council. The only possible solution of the difficulty would appear to be gradually to give the provinces a larger measure of self-government, until at last India would consist of a number of administrations, autonomous in all provincial affairs, with the Government of India above them all, and possessing power to interfere in cases of misgovernment, but ordinarily restricting their functions to matters of Imperial concern.

The real significance of this passage was thus commented upon on February 28, 1913, in a remarkable speech delivered at Cambridge by Mr. Montagu, then Under-Secretary of State for India :—

Where the difference lies is in this, that we have endeavoured to look ahead, to co-ordinate our changes in Bengal with the general lines of our future policy in India, which is stated now for the first time in the Government of India's Despatch that had been published as a Parliamentary Paper. That statement shows the goal, the aim towards which we propose to work not immediately, not in a hurry, but gradually.

We cannot drift on for ever without stating a policy. A new generation, a new school of thought fostered by our education and new European training has grown up, and it asks, 'What are you going to do with us ?' . . . We have never answered that, and we have put off answering them for so long. At last, and not too soon, a Viceroy has had the courage to state the trend of British policy in India and the lines on which we propose to advance.

Lord Crewe, pulled behind by the reactionaries, Lords Lansdowne and Curzon, no doubt tried to repudiate the hopes raised by the "exuberant language" of the Government of India. But neither his Lordship nor any of his successors could stay the march of India and the great ideal of provincial autonomy boldly enunciated in an official despatch and firmly planted in the hearts of a people, an ideal which must inevitably tend to Self-Government for India could not certainly be smothered even by the hand of a Secretary of State for India.

HINDU-MOSLEM *Entente.*

The official recognition of the principle of provincial autonomy was certainly a bright star helping the people to march onwards. But this was not all. There was visible on the political horizon another bright star which promised a great future for the country. For years attempts had been sedulously made by the enemies of Indian progress to separate Hindus and Mussalmans and to make the Mussalman community believe that their interests were distinct and separate from those of the Hindus and that it was not to their interest that they should join hands with their Hindu brethren in political agitation. Several leading

Mahomedans and some of the truest and the noblest English friends of India like Sir William Wedderburn had been endeavouring for years to make the Mussalmans realise the imperative necessity there was for their working in amity with the Hindus for the common good of the country where they will be brought together in loving and brotherly service for the motherland. Thanks to the good offices of distinguished leaders of both the communities like the late lamented Mr. Gokhale and H. H. the Aga Khan, the efforts to reconcile their differences met with happy response and all India rejoiced when the Moslem League at its session in 1911 also adopted the ideal of Self-Government for India. The Congress of 1913 placed on record its warm appreciation of the adoption by the All-India Moslem League of the ideal of Self-Government for India within the British Empire. It was happier still to express its complete concurrence in the belief the Moslem League had so emphatically declared at its last sessions that the political future of the country depends on the harmonious working and co-operation of the various communities. Thenceforward Hindus and Mahomedans began

to concentrate their attention on the one united ideal for them:

"the India of the future will be a stronger, nobler, greater, higher, aye, and a brighter India than was realised by Asoka in the plenitude of his power, a better India than was revealed to Akbar in the wildest of his visions."

INDIA AND THE WAR.

When the 29th session of the Congress met at Madras it was five months after the present great world war had commenced—a war in which Great Britain had joined and quite justly, to keep her solemn word with Belgium and above all to prevent the ruthless destruction of the rights of smaller nationalities; and the princes and people of India naturally rallied their forces to help the Empire in its great struggle for liberty and the cause of civilization. It was certain the war "will knock off the last weights of mediæval domination of one man over many, of one race over another" and no man can "bar the imponderable influences of an expanding world."

The alacrity with which India had profferred help by sending her troops to the battlefields in Flanders and other places and the magnificent help rendered in various shapes to the Empire at a period of great crisis had touched the hearts of the English people and even politicians who

used to speak disparagingly of in the past shown their stony hearts to the people of India acknowledged in exuberant language India's timely services, avowed that the old angle of vision had changed and that Great Britain should no longer think of India as a Dependency but as a joint and equal partner in the great heritage of the British Empire. The Hon. Babu Bhupendranath Basu, whose duty it was to voice the aspirations of his countrymen, declared that what India wanted was neither subordination nor separation but "a joint partnership on equal terms."

The resolution on the subject, passed at the Congress, ran as follows:—

That in view of the profound and avowed loyalty that the people of India have manifested in the present crisis, this Congress appeals to the Government to deepen and perpetuate it, and make it an enduring and valuable asset of the Empire, by removing all invidious distinctions here, and abroad, between His Majesty's Indian, and other subjects, by redeeming the pledges of Provincial autonomy contained in the Despatch of the 25th August 1911, and by taking such measures as may be necessary for the recognition of India as a component part of a federated Empire, in the full and the free enjoyment of the rights belonging to that status.

The great war afforded India an opportunity to demonstrate "the courage, bravery and tenacity of her troops even when pitted against the best organised armies of the world

and also the capacity of her sons of all clans and nationalities to rise as one people under the stimulus of over-powering emotion." In the words of Mr. Austen Chamberlain, "the people of India, sepoys and Maharajas, villagers and highly educated public men, have given their support because they are deeply convinced that in this war the British Empire is fighting in a just and righteous cause. The Indian people have a high sense of right and wrong. They saw that in this war the Allies were in the right, and they regarded the cause of the Allies as the cause of India."

But "the real innerness of the striking manifestation of loyalty was," as correctly described by Mr. Charles Roberts, M. P., the Under Secretary of State for India, "to be found in the desire of the Indian peoples that Indian soldiers should take part in the war side by side with their British comrades."

The most striking and historic event of the war, an event calculated to produce consequences of a far-reaching character was, therefore, the participation of India in the world war of the Empire. In announcing the news of the despatch of the Indian troops to France, H. E. Lord

Hardinge, whose name will ever be held dear by India, observed :—

There is nothing like comradeship in arms and joint participation in the dangers and hardships of war to level distinctions, inspire mutual respect, and foster friendship. I cannot help feeling that as a consequence better relations will be promoted amongst the component parts of the British Empire. Many misunderstandings will be removed and outstanding grievances will be settled in an amicable and generous manner. In this sense, out of evil good may come to India, and this is the desire of us all.

Lord Hardinge's expectation was not in vain. The Indian troops which fought side by side with the troops from Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa distinguished themselves by their gallant behaviour and splendid heroism and some of them were recommended for the coveted distinction of the Victoria Cross. In the words of Mr. Asquith "the battlefields of France and Flanders bore undying tribute to their bravery and devotion." Mr. Asquith proudly stated "he did not think that in all the moving exhibitions of national and Imperial patriotism which the war had evoked there was any which had more touched and rightly touched, the feelings of this House and the country than the message sent by the Viceroy of India announcing the magnificent response which the Princes and people of that country have made to our need."

Mr. Bonar Law was more enthusiastic still. He said :

"This assistance from India also was coming, not from force but from good-will, and he believed that it was coming because, on the whole, every one who left this country to take part in the Government of India, from the Viceroy to the humblest official, was inspired by the tradition that it was his duty, not to exploit India for the benefit of this country, but to rule it for the good of the people of India."

Among the numerous touching and grateful appreciations of British statesmen nothing had stirred the hearts and raised the hopes of the Indian people more than the notable statement of Mr. Bonar Law (at a great meeting at the Guild-hall, held on May 18, 1915, under the presidency of the Lord Mayor.) "The Dominions of the British Empire had not been created by the war, but the conditions had been changed by the war, and it was his hope, and if it was taken up in earnest while the metal was still glowing red hot from the furnace of war, he believed it could be done, that as a result of it we might see a Parliament of the British Empire, in which every part of that Empire, in proportion to its resources and its numbers, would share in the duty and the honour of ruling the British Empire."

Lord Crewe who spoke at the same meeting, in endorsing Mr. Bonar Law's sentiments regarding the future, uttered these remarkable words:—"I would like also to think that the association of India and of the Colonies at such a gathering as this is a significant sign of the essential comprehension which, as the years roll on, would, as I firmly believe, sweep away all those obstacles of distance, of creed, or of race which seem to interfere with the complete union of the different members of the great Imperial Confederation—a union which would hinge upon the free activities of each, and which would be firmly based upon a common belief in the progress of the whole." At the same meeting Mr. Asquith referred publicly, in speaking of the services of India, to the greatness of the "Empire which knows no distinction of race or class where all alike are subjects of the King Emperor and are joint and equal custodians of common interest and fortunes." Lord Haldane made pointed mention of the fact that India had freely given of her lives and treasure in humanity's great cause and "hence things cannot be left as they are." The mighty struggle had made every one "realise our oneness, so producing relations between India and England which did not exist

before. Our victory would be a victory to the Empire as a whole and could not fail to raise it (India) to a higher level."

More hopeful still was the message which Mr. William Archer gave to the British democracy regarding its obligations to India :—

"It now rests with us to help her forward, honestly, diligently, and with deliberate, intelligent purpose, on the path which shall lead her out of tutelage, and up to the eminent place to which her innate capacities entitle her in the economy of the Empire and of the world."*

All India was proud to learn that Great Britain had been impressed profoundly by "the spectacle of a whole nation, from prince to peasant, rallying to her side and placing its resources and services unreservedly at her disposal. In the exuberance of of her (Great Britain's) gratitude, India was assured of her title to self-rule being recognised and to her being lifted from a position of dependency to that of partnership in the Imperial scheme." Some time elapsed and there arose a suspicion that British enthusiasm had cooled down. Mr. Asquith had spoken of "the refashioning of the fabric of the Empire" and

* For the utterances of "British statesmen on India and the War" refer to pages 241 to 250, Appendix III. *The Indian Demands.*

all over England the proposal that the ministers of the Dominions should be admitted into the Councils of the Empire had been received with great approval. The Prime Ministers of Canada and Australia had even been invited to attend the meetings of the Cabinet. The responsible minister who in answer to a question in the House of Commons had denied representation to India to the Economic Conference held at Paris, promptly sent Mr. Hughes of Australia to attend its sittings with Lord Crewe and Mr. Bonar Law. "In all the discussions very little reference to India was found, and what there was of it was not altogether hope-inspiring. The Secretary of State for India had hardly had a cheering or comforting word to utter during the whole of the sixteen months he had occupied the position of what Sir William Wedderburn once described as the seat of the Grand Moghul at Westminster. He had found time to put through Parliament two such uncalled for and retrograde measures as the Indian Civil Service Act and the Government of India Act, and the Prime Minister had spared Parliamentary time for their passage through both Houses in all their stages; but the annual debate on Indian affairs had been suspended

and there had been no comprehensive, authoritative statement on the policy of His Majesty's Government in relation to India."

INDIA AND THE EMPIRE'S RECONSTRUCTION.

It would be idle to conceal the fact that an uneasy feeling began to creep into the minds of the Indian people and responsible politicians felt that when the Colonies were trying to get a proper place for themselves in the new fabric of the Empire, India's claims to equality of status and a share of the privileges of the Empire were likely to be neglected. There was also a well-grounded fear, that the Colonies also would obtain a voice in the administration of India and the idea of more masters for India was positively revolting to her sense of self-respect, and especially at a time when she was justly and anxiously looking forward to taking her proper place in the Empire. These circumstances gave a fresh impetus to India's demand for Self-Government and an insistent demand for a declaration of the policy of the State in regard to her political future. About the same period Mrs. Besant who had long been working for India's uplift in various directions focussed her energies upon the problem of Home Rule for India and urged upon India as Mr. Bonar

Law urged upon the Colonies to press her claims for autonomy with boldness, persistence and increasing vigour. By her forceful contributions to the Press, her inspiring eloquence and by her *brochures* and pamphlets she made the country from one end to the other ring with the cry of Home Rule. The attitude adopted by some of the Provincial Governments towards her served but to give fresh stimulus to the cause she was advocating. A profound sense of the great danger to the Empire caused by the sudden outburst of the war had softened the rigour of the extremist school of thought, and its adherents, anxious to render every assistance they could to the cause of the Allies, threw in their lot once more with the Indian National Congress and its avowed aims. When, therefore, the 30th session of the Indian National Congress commenced its memorable session in Bombay under the presidency of Sir S. P. Sinha, who had been for some time in the inner counsels of the Government, he but gave expression to the prevailing feeling not only of the delegates assembled there but of the country as well when he proclaimed once again that the only satisfactory form of Self-Government, to which India aspires, cannot be

anything short of what President Lincoln so pithily described as "Government of the people, by the people, for the people." In his presidential address he made an earnest appeal to the British nation to show its approval "of the goal to which we aspire." The Congress took a further step forward when it passed the following resolution:—

> That this Congress is of opinion that the time has arrived to introduce further and substantial measures of reform towards the attainment of Self-Government as defined in Article I of its Constitution, namely, reforming and liberalising the system of Government in this country so as to secure to the people an effective control over it.

But more noteworthy still was the direction given to the All-India Congress Committee

> to confer with the Committee that may be appointed by the All-India Moslem League for the same purpose and to take such further measures as may be necessary; the said Committee to submit its report on or before the 1st of September 1916 to the General Secretaries, who shall circulate it to the different Provincial Congress Committees as early as possible.

THE CONGRESS AND MOSLEM LEAGUE SCHEME.

Accordingly the All-India Congress Committee invited proposals from the various provincial Congress Committees, considered all the suggestions and prepared a scheme at its meeting held at Allahabad on the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th April 1916. In November a joint Conference of the All India Congress Committee and the Moslem League deliberated over

the scheme for over two full days, and discussed it again at Lucknow on the 25th, 26th and 27th December. The scheme was once again considered in the Subjects Committee of the Lucknow Congress and finally adopted unanimously amidst great rejoicings by the sessions of the Congress and of the Moslem League held about the same time in the historic city of Lucknow.

The Resolution adopted at the Congress was as follows :—

(*a*) That having regard to the fact that the great communities of India are the inheritors of ancient civilisations and have shown great capacity for government and administration, and to the progress in education and public spirit made by them during a century of British Rule, and further having regard to the fact that the present system of Government does not satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the people and has become unsuited to the existing conditions and requirements, the Congress is of opinion that the time has come when His Majesty the King-Emperor should issue a Proclamation announcing that it is the aim and intention of the British policy to confer Self-Government on India at an early date.

(*b*) That this Congress demands that a definite step should be taken towards Self-Government by granting the reforms contained in the scheme prepared by the All-India Congress Committee in concert with the Reform Committee appointed by the All-India Muslim League.

(*c*) That, in the reconstruction of the Empire, India shall be lifted from the position of a Dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire with the Self-Governing Dominions.

THE MEMORANDUM OF THE NINETEEN.

While the Congress and the Moslem League

Committees were preparing their scheme of reforms it transpired that the Government of India was contemplating a Despatch to the Secretary of State on the question of the reforms and changes to be made in the constitution of the Government of India. It was then that nineteen of the elected members of the Viceroy's Council felt it their duty to give a reasoned statement of India's views and aspirations and presenting it in a document in their name. This is how the memorandum of the nineteen came to be presented and the scheme adopted unanimously by the Congress and the Moslem League was settled upon and those that suggest that novel and revolutionary proposals have been sprung upon the authorities by the Indian people at a time when the Empire is in the throes of a tremendous struggle are consciously or unconsciously misrepresenting the motives and actions of the Indian leaders. Many of the reforms advocated are as old as the Congress itself and self-government has been the objective from the beginning. "Generations of British statesman have repeatedly laid down that policy, solemn declarations of successive Sovereigns have graciously endorsed it, and Acts of Parliament have given it legislative sanction."

To use the words of Sir S. P. Sinha : "Autonomy within the Empire has been the accepted political faith of the Congress."

I appeal to the British nation to declare their ungrudging approval of the goal to which we aspire, to declare their inflexible resolution to equip India for her journey to that goal and to furnish her escort on the long and weary road. Such a declaration will be the most distinguished way of marking their appreciation of India's services and sacrifices—her loyalty and her devotion to the Empire. Such a declaration will touch the heart and appeal to the imagination of the people far more than any mere specific political reforms.

The country is therefore fully justified in demanding a declaration of policy from Government in this respect. Of the immense political and moral value such a course would carry with it, very little need be said. The Rt. Rev. Dr. Whitehead, the Lord Bishop of Madras, who has served in and known the different parts of India and who has had abundant opportunities to study at first hand the conditions of India and the aspirations of its leaders, has suggested the very same course in a recent contribution to the *Nineteenth Century and After*:

I cannot help thinking that in the same way the British Government would enormously strengthen its position in India if it were to make the self-government of India as an integral part of the British Empire its avowed object and ideal, encouraging educated Indians definitely to look forward to this ideal and shaping its own policy consistently with a view to this one great

end. The Government would then practically adopt the platform of the Nationalist Party. There would be no differences between them as to the end at which they are aiming, and though there would naturally be much difference of opinion, not only between Englishmen and Indians, but also between Indians and Indians and Englishmen and Englishmen with regard to the particular steps that might wisely be taken at any particular time, still both alike would be working for a common ideal. The difference that this would make in the relations between the Government and the educated Indians as a body, as represented by the National Congress, would be immense. It would alter the whole of the political situation and would do more than anything else to allay the unrest which has been such a disquieting feature of Indian politics during the last fifty years, and it would give a consistency to our work and policy which at the present moment they do not possess.

His Lordship also rightly pointed out:

The danger of the present situation consists largely in the fact that, with notable exceptions, Englishmen in India are not only opposed to the feelings and sentiments of educated Indians, but also to the inevitable tendency of their work and policy. We need to realise that we cannot now base the Government of India upon any other foundation than that of the will of the Indian peoples, that we are here as servants of the Indian people and not as their masters, that a foreign bureaucracy can only be regarded as a temporary form of Government, and that our ultimate aim and object must be to enable India to become a self-governing part of the British Empire, and to develop her own civilization upon her own lines.

More emphatic still was the pronouncement of the Metropolitan of India. In the course of a remarkable Sermon preached at the St. Paul's Cathedral, Calcutta, on August 4th, the Third

War Anniversary Day, the Christian divine uttered a much needed warning:

> **We have become the paramount power in India by a series of conquests in which we have used Indian soldiers and had Indian allies. We have remained the paramount power in India because the Indian peoples needed our protection against foreign foes and against internal disorder. We must now look at our paramount position in the light of our own war-ideals. The British rule in India must aim at giving India opportunities of self-development according to the natural bent of its peoples. With this in view, the first object of its rulers must be to train Indians in Self-Government. If we turn away from any such application of our principles to this country, it is but hypocrisy to come before God with the plea that our cause is the cause of liberty.**

But the Congress will not be content with a mere declaration of the policy of the Government in regard to Self-Government. The authorities must, as a first step in that direction, take early measures for the introduction of such changes and reforms as are directly calculated to achieve the high purpose in view.

THE RECONSTITUTION OF THE COUNCILS.

The first great step necessary is the reconstitution of the Indian Councils, the Legislative and Executive Councils of the Viceroy and of the Provincial Governments. And only if this is done "hope may come where despair holds sway, and faith where doubt spreads its darkening shadow."

THE HISTORY OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS.

The history of the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils is thus briefly told:

Before the creation of one regular legislature for British India by the Charter Act of 1833, the Governments of Madras and Bombay as well as the Governor-General-in-Council of Bengal had such powers to make laws and regulations for their respective territories and thus separate bodies of Regulations had grown up in the three presidencies. The legislative powers were not distinguished from the executive and the two were lodged in the same hands. . . . .
This confusion was put an end to by the Act of 1833, which vested the legislative power of the Indian Government exclusively in the Governor-General-in-Council and under which Macaulay was appointed in the following year to be the first legislative councillor on the Governor-General's Council, that body being thus increased by the addition of a fourth ordinary member, who had no power to sit or vote except at meetings for the purpose of making laws and regulations. The laws made by this Council were, subject to their not being disallowed by the Court of Directors, to have effect as Acts of Parliament. A clear distinction between the executive and the legislative body is here recognised for the first time, and the Act of 1833 may be regarded as the first land-mark in the history of the Indian Legislative Councils.

The second land-mark was erected by the Charter Act of 1853, by which the fourth or legislative member of the Governor-General's Council was placed on the same footing with the ordinary members of the Council by being given a right to sit or vote at executive meetings. The Council was at the same time enlarged for legislative purposes by the addition of six members: the Chief Justice of Bengal, another judge and four of the Company's servants of ten years' standing appointed by the Governments of Bengal, Madras, Bombay and the

North-Western Provinces. The Governor-General's Council, thus enlarged for the purpose of legislation, had, in this way, twelve members : the Governor-General, the Commander-in-Chief, four ordinary members of the Council, the Chief Justice of Bengal, a puisne judge and four representative members from the four provinces. The sittings of the Legislative Council were made public and their proceedings were officially published. This Legislative Council, however, evinced an inconvenient degree of independence and a tendency to interfere with the executive, and the defect was remedied eight years later.*

Though the authority of the East India Company was transferred to the Crown in 1858, the constitution of the Indian Government remained unchanged.

No native of the country had any share in the deliberations of the Council even when Legislative measures were discussed. No wonder, then, that many a serious mistake was made, some of the blunders resulting in terrible consequences. It is interesting to recall at this moment the observations in the famous pamphlet on "The Causes of the Indian Mutiny" written by the late Sir Syed Ahmed. That distinguished Mussalman patriot and publicist wrote as follows in 1858 :—

The original cause of the outbreak was the non-admission of a native as a member into the Legislative Council. . . . .

* "*Indian Administration*," by Prof. V. G. Kale.

Most men, I believe, agree in thinking that it is highly conducive to the welfare and prosperity of Government; indeed it is essential to its stability that the people should have a voice in its Councils. It is from the voice of the people only that Government can learn whether its projects are likely to be well received. The voice of the people can alone check errors in the bud, and warn us of the dangers before they burst upon and destroy us. . . . . . .

The evils which resulted to India from the non-admission of natives into the Legislative Council of India were various.

The necessity for a reform of the Indian Councils was keenly felt, and steps were soon taken to achieve that end.

By the Indian Councils Act of 1861, the power of legislation was restored to the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay, and a Legislative Council was appointed for Bengal, while the Governor-General in Council retained legislative authority over the whole of India. It enacted :—

For the better exercise of the power of making laws and regulations vested in the Governor-General-in-Council, the Governor General shall nominate, in addition to the ordinary and extraordinary members above mentioned and to such Lieutenant-Governor in the case aforesaid, such persons, not less than six nor more than twelve in number as to him may seem expedient, to be members of Council for the purpose of making laws and regulations only; and such persons shall not be entitled to sit or vote at any meeting of the Council, except at meetings held for such purpose; provided that not less than one-half of the persons so nominated shall be non-official persons, that is, persons who, at the date of such nomination, shall not be in the Civil or

Military service of the Crown in India and that the seat in a Council of any non-official member accepting office under the Crown in India shall be vacated on such acceptance.

Sir Charles Wood, speaking in the House of Commons, on June 6, 1861, in explaining the provisions of the Bill, pointed out the difficulties that faced them in legislating for a country like India :

We have to legislate for different races, with different languages, religions, manners, and customs, ranging from the bigoted Mahomedan, who considers that we have usurped his legitimate position as the ruler of India, to the timid Hindoo, who, though bowing to every conqueror, is bigotedly attached to his caste, his religion, his laws, and his customs, which have descended to him uninterruptedly for countless generations. But, added to that, we have English settlers in India differing in almost every respect from the Native population active, energetic, enterprising, with all the pride of race and conquest, presuming on their superior powers, and looking down in many respects, and I am afraid violating in others, the feelings and prejudices of the Native population with whom, nevertheless, they must be subject to laws passed by the legislative body in India.

He added :

I believe greater advantages will result from admitting the Native Chiefs to co-operate with us for legislative purposes ; they will no longer feel, as they have hitherto done, that they are excluded from the management of affairs in their own country, and nothing, I am persuaded, will tend more to conciliate to our rule the minds of Natives of high rank. I have no intention of doing anything to make this Council a debating society. I wish, to quote an expression of Sir Lawrence Peel, to render them a body for making laws. The Council of the Governor-General, with these additional members, will have power to pass laws and regulations affecting

the whole of India and will have a supreme and concurrent power with the minor legislative bodies which I propose to establish in the Presidencies and in other parts of India.

According to the Act of 1861, financial discussion was possible only when the Finance Minister proposed a new tax, and the few Indians who were admitted to the Council were nominated members chosen by the Government themselves. Such an unsatisfactory state of things might have been tolerated in the years immediately following the Mutiny, but could not possibly be continued without criticism. Great strides had been made in many respects and intelligent Indian public opinion, though not so powerful and voluminous as it has become in later times, had even then made itself felt on the authorities. "The fuller development and consolidation of those sentiments of national unity that had their origin" in Lord Ripon's ever memorable reign, expressed themselves in unmistakable terms.

REFORM OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS.

The question of the reform and expansion of the Supreme and Local Legislative Councils, by the addition of a considerable proportion of elected members, formed the subject of an important resolution at the very first session of the Indian

National Congress held in Bombay in 1885. At the second Congress it was debated with renewed vigour; Dr. Rajendra Lal Mitra, the renowned Oriental scholar, uttered the very remarkable words:

> We live not under a National Government, but under a foreign bureaucracy; our foreign rulers are foreigners by birth, religion, language, habits, by everything that divides humanity into different sections. They cannot possibly dive into our hearts; they cannot ascertain our wants, our feelings, our aspirations. They may try their best, and I have no reason to doubt that many of our Governors have tried hard to ascertain our feelings and our wants; but owing to their peculiar position, they have failed to ascertain them.

At the fifth Congress the question was again taken up and a skeleton scheme for the reform and reconstitution of the councils was duly adopted, and the President of the Congress was authorised to submit the same to Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, M. P. with the request that he would cause a Bill to be drafted on the lines indicated therein and introduce the same in the House of Commons. Charles Bradlaugh, that noble friend of humanity, true to the promise he had made to the people of India in Congress assembled, introduced the Bill entitled "An Act to Amend the India Councils Act of 1861." The next Congress, which met at Calcutta prayed the Houses of Parliament to pass Mr. Bradlaugh's Bill into law.

The introduction of Mr. Bradlaugh's Bill "at once dispelled the fit of profound cogitation in which gentlemen at the head of Indian affairs had lost themselves and from which they could not spontaneously recover. Lord Cross' Indian Councils Bill promptly saw the light of day in the House of Lords. It was, as Mr. (Sir) P. M. Mehta rightly observed, "the official recognition of the *raison d' être* of the Congress and the first of its labours."

The Indian Councils Act of 1892 was an attempt to concede the principle of representation to the Councils by election. Mr. (now Lord) Curzon, in explaining the provisions of the Bill in the House of Commons, observed that the object of the Bill was to

> widen the basis and expand the functions of the Government of India, to give further opportunities than at present existed to the non-official and native element in Indian society to take part in the work of government, and in that way to lend official recognition to that remarkable development both in political interest and capacity which had been visible among the higher classes of Indian society since the Government was taken over by the Crown in 1858.

Lord Lansdowne, in explaining the policy of the Bill, observed:

> We hope, however, that we have succeeded in giving to our proposal a form sufficiently definite to secure a satisfactory advance in the representation of the people

in our Legislative Councils, and to give effect to the principle of selection as far as possible on the advice of such sections of the community as are likely to be capable of assisting us in that manner.

The Bill admittedly contained the elective principle, and it was during the debate on this occasion that Mr. Gladstone observed that the question of the introduction of the elective element into the Government of India was "one of vital importance." "What we want is," he said, "*to get at the real heart and mind, the most upright sentiments, and the most enlightened thoughts of the people of India*," and he therefore looked forward "*not merely to a nominal but to a real living representation of the people of India.*" But unfortunately the Act itself did not "in terms concede to the people the right of electing their own representatives to the Council," and the task of making rules and regulations was left to the Viceroy ; and they were of a most unsatisfactory character. No wonder that the Congress of 1893 had with regret to put on record the fact "that, alike in the rules of the Government of India and in the practice of most of the Local Governments, notably in that of the Government of Bombay, material alterations are necessary if real effect is

to be given to the spirit of this Act." The most trenchant criticism of the rules and regulations framed by the Viceroy was that made at that Congress by Mr. G. K. Gokhale who said:

> Gentlemen, in regard to these Rules [framed for the Presidency of Bombay to give effect to the Act], I will not say that they have been deliberately so framed as to defeat the object of the Act of 1892, but I will say this, that if the officer who drafted them had been asked to sit down with the deliberate purpose of framing a scheme to defeat that object, he could not have done better.

It is noteworthy that, writing in 1894, two years after the Act of 1892 Sir George Chesney while remarking that it was "thus the first beginning of what may possibly hereafter develop into some thing of the nature of Parliamentary institutions as obtaining in other parts of the world" said: "the step taken may not be a wide one; the mode of regulating nominations rests with the Executive Government; the bodies to which this partial nomination has been entrusted are themselves elected on a very narrow and exclusive franchise."

At the 20th Congress held at Bombay under the Presidency of Sir Henry Cotton, the demand was made that "the people of this country should be allowed a larger voice in the administration and control of their affairs," and besides seeking an

enlargement of both the Supreme and Provincial Legislative Councils, and an increase of non-official members therein, it rightly claimed "*the right to divide the Council on all the financial matters coming before them—the head of the Government possessing the power of veto.*"

THE MINTO-MORLEY REFORMS.

The agitation for a better and a more effective representation of the people in the Legislative Councils grew more and more pronounced; the discontent against the method and manner in which the rules and regulations under the Statute were "framed, worked, and continued for a period of sixteen years in spite of protests from the public," grew intense; added to this was the indignation and deep disgust and disappointment caused by the reactionary regime of Lord Curzon. The situation in every respect caused grave anxiety to the responsible leaders of the people. Lord Minto, who inherited the highly embarrassing legacy of the troubles and difficulties of Lord Curzon's regime, "recognised" before he had been many months in the land "frankly and publicly that new aspirations were stirring in the hearts of the people, that they were part of a larger movement common to the whole East, and that it was

necessary to satisfy them to a reasonable extent by giving them a larger share in the administration of affairs."

Lord Minto heartily acknowledged the loyalty of the masses of the people of India, and he was not prepared "to suppress the new but not unnatural aspirations without examination." To use his own figure of speech "you cannot sit for ever on a safety valve, no matter how sound the boiler may be." He recognised that "ere long he would have to deal with a mass of accumulated popular discontent—a discontent which was difficult to define, but which many moderate and loyal Indians believed to be due to the disregard on the part of their rulers of their (the Indians) just hopes." According to his Lordship, much of the discontent "was justifiable and was directly due to a dawning belief that further opportunities must be afforded for the official representation of Indian public opinion and a greater share be granted to Indians in the government of their country." The first year of his office had not closed before the new Viceroy drew a note for circulation among his colleagues, in the course of which he said:

The growth of education which British rule has done so much to encourage is bearing fruit. Important classes of the population are learning to realise their

own position, to estimate for themselves their own intellectual capacities and to compare their claims for an equality of citizenship with those of the ruling race, whilst the directing influences of political life at home are simultaneously in full accord with the advance of political thought in India . . . But we, the Government of India, cannot shut our eyes to present conditions. The political atmosphere is full of change. Questions are before us which we cannot afford to ignore and which we must attempt to answer, and to me it would appear all-important that the initiative should emanate from us; that the Government of India should not be put in the position of appearing to have its hands forced by agitation in this country or by pressure from home; that we should be the first to recognise surrounding conditions and to place before His Majesty's Government the opinion which personal experience and a close touch with the every-day life of India entitle us to hold.

This is the true genesis of the Minto-Morley reforms. In their famous despatch to the Secretary of State, dated the 1st October, 1908, Lord Minto's Government urged:

The advance in general education that has taken place since 1892 has added to the complexity of the problem by bringing to the front classes which were then backward, and by making them more keenly conscious of their individual interests and more disposed to claim separate representation by means of special electorates. In framing the greatly enlarged scheme of reform, which is explained below, we have given careful consideration to the views of all classes, and we desire to acknowledge the value of opinions which have been submitted by the educated members of all communities who, though their number is relatively small, deservedly occupy a special position by reason of their intellectual attainments and the attention they have given to public questions.

Referring to the proposed increase in the numbers and the reconstitution of the Legislative Councils, the despatch stated:

We have every hope that the confidence we are willing to place in the intelligence and public spirit of the non-official members will be justified, and that increased responsibility will bring with it the requisite forbearance.

. . . .

It may reasonably be anticipated that in the newly-constituted Councils only as many officials need be appointed as will be sufficient, in conjunction with three or four non-officials, to enable the Government to carry their legislative measures. . . . . .

We are of opinion that the time has come when there should be further facilities for debate. We think that members should have opportunities for placing their views on public questions before the Government, and we are impressed with the benefits which both the Government and the educated public would derive from the well-ordered discussion of administrative subjects in the Legislative Councils, either on a reference from the head of the Government, or at the instance of a private member. Such discussions would give the Government an opportunity of making their view of a question known, and of explaining the reasons which had led them to adopt a particular line of action. We therefore propose that power should be given by statute for members to move resolutions on matters of general public importance, subject to the checks to which we shall presently refer. So far as the educated public are concerned, there can be little doubt that the right to move resolutions on such questions, and to argue these in a regular debate, will be welcomed as a very great concession; that it will be resorted to freely; and that it will tend to bring about more intimate relations between the official and non-official members. . . . . .

We are clearly of opinion that it is advisable that the Councils should be afforded increased facilities for expressing their views upon the budget, and that these facilities should be given at a sufficiently early stage to enable the Government to take advantage of any advice that may be tendered, and to adopt and give effect to such suggestions as may be found practicable. . .

Both in the Imperial and the Provincial Councils, they will place the representatives of all classes of the

population in a position to take a more effective part in shaping the policy of the Government, and to exert a real influence upon the actual work of administration. .

The enlargement of the Legislative Councils, and the extension of their functions to the discussion of administrative questions, are the widest, most deep-reaching and most substantial features of the scheme which we now put forward. . . . .

Regarding the scheme as a whole, we consider ourselves justified in claiming for it that it will really and effectively associate the people of India with the Government in the work not only of occasional legislation but of actual every-day administration. . , . .

Lord Morley, the Secretary of State for India, replied to this despatch in his remarkable communication, dated 27th November, 1908. He recognised the just observation of Lord Minto, "*that the principle to be borne in mind is that election by the wishes of the people is the ultimate object to be secured, whatever may be the actual machinery adopted for giving effect to it.*"

The Rt. Hon. Mr. Asquith, speaking on April 1, 1909, on the order for the second reading of the Indian Councils Bill, pointed out:

t is most desirable in the circumstances to give to the people of India the feeling that these legislative councils are not mere automatons, the wires of which are pulled by the official hierarchy. It is of very great importance from that point of view that the non-official element should be in the ascendant, subject to proper safeguards. In that way you obtain some kind of security that the legislation which finally passes through the mill of the council reflects the opinion of the community:—

No account of the origin of the Minto-Morley reforms will be complete which does not refer to the part played by Mr. Gokhale in bringing them to a successful fruition. By his telling speeches not only in the Viceregal Council in India but also to influential audiences in England and by his interviews with Lord Morley and his colleagues, Mr. Gokhale made the Government of the day realise the justice of the demands of the Indian people. It is now an open secret that almost all the reforms which Mr. Gokhale advocated and jotted down at the instance of Lord Morley on the famous sheet of note-paper* were ultimately granted.

The whole country welcomed the reforms with great expectation and joy, and the 23rd Indian National Congress which met at Madras after the unfortunate split at Surat gave expression "to the deep and general satisfaction with which the reform proposals formulated in Lord Morley's Despatch had been received throughout the country." It recorded also its sense of the high statesmanship which had dictated the action of the Government in the matter, and its sincere and grateful thanks to Lord Morley and Lord Minto, who had laboured hard to originate and promote the

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* Vide Page 200, "Morley's Indian Speeches."

reforms. But the expectation and joy of the people were destined to be short-lived. For a second time, as India's misfortune would have it, the important task of framing the rules and regulations relating to the nomination and election of members of the enlarged Councils was left to the tender mercies of the Indian bureaucracy. The Congress which in the previous year had recorded in glowing terms its high appreciation of the principles of the reform scheme had, in the next year, after seeing the rules and regulations that had been framed, to place on record, among other things, its strong sense of disapproval of

> the wide, arbitrary and unreasonable disqualification and restrictions for candidates seeking election to the Councils ;
>
> the general distrust of the educated classes that runs through the whole course of the regulations ;
>
> and the unsatisfactory composition of the non-official majorities in the Provincial Councils, rendering them ineffective and unreal for all practical purposes.

It fell to Mr. Gokhale's lot to give strong expression to the injustice done to the principle underlying the Indian Councils Act of 1892, by the narrow and illiberal rules and regulations framed by the Indian bureaucracy to defeat the very objects aimed at. In 1909, it was Mr. Surendranath Banerjea's painful duty to burst forth as follows in open Congress :—

It is no exaggeration to say that the Rules and Regulations have practically wrecked the Reform Scheme as originally conceived with a beneficence of purpose and a statesmanlike grasp that did honour to all that are associated with it . . . Who wrecked the scheme? Who converted that promising experiment into a dismal failure? The responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the bureaucracy . . . . . Is the bureaucracy having its revenge upon us for the part we have played in securing these concessions?

Deep was the disappointment and great the indignation caused, but Mr. Banerjea counselled his countrymen not to abandon hope. He said:

Let us see to it that, in the depths of our desperation, we do not forget the immemorial traditions of our race, or renounce the unalterable faith which is ours in the ultimate triumph of constitutional and righteous means for the attainment of national regeneration.

But the hope was in vain; the manner in which the rules and regulations have been worked, and the unsympathetic attitude adopted by the bureaucracy in dealing with the resolutions of the non-official members, have made almost every one of them confess to a feeling of helplessness. Almost every member of the Provincial and Imperial Councils has a sad tale to tell. It is pathetic to read the following tale unfolded in the pages of *The Indian Review* (March 1917) by Mr. Nyapati Subba Rao Pantulu, a distinguished Indian publicist, who had been for years a member of the Madras Legislative Council, then became a Member of the Im-

perial Legislative Council, and now is Joint General Secretary of the Indian National Congress :—

The deep disappointment caused by the regulations, and the narrow interpretation put upon them, is writ large in the pages of proceedings of the Legislative Council and in the columns of the Indian Press. . . .

The constitution of the Provincial Councils has been so manipulated that even where an *elected* majority is given the official continues to dominate over the Council, and the non-official majority has, in practice, become a minority. . . . .

As the scheme is at present worked, nothing can be carried in our Provincial Councils against the will of the officials who, in combination with the elected European members and nominated non-official Indians, specially selected to keep up the power and prestige of the Government, lord it over them, and make the position of the elected representatives of the people helpless. The elected members not infrequently try to save their face by accepting the suggestions or amendments of the Government and proceed to vote or call for a division, though certain of defeat, to secure a moral victory and show to the public the perversity of the attitude of the Government who would not, by the weight of numbers and sometimes by the influence of the head of the Government, allow even a recommendation to be made to themselves. Important schemes of expenditure are shut out of discussion on the ground that the subject is under correspondence, and the powers of the Council with regard to the framing of the Budget are nil. *A feeling of helplessness is felt by the elected members at every step, and they are placed entirely at the mercy of the Government.*

The Hon. Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya, who had served for years in the United Provinces Legislative Council and is now its

representative in the Imperial Legislative Council who is held in universal esteem by his countrymen and whose sincerity of purpose and moderation of language have won for him the admiration of even his official opponents, declared not long ago that "the conclusion is forced on our mind that *those who have the power are unwilling to part with that power*," and he added that "unless we have a potent and determining voice in the administration of our country's affairs, there is not much hope for that progress which it is the birthright of every civilized people to achieve."

As regards the various Provincial Councils, in the Madras Legislative Council, the hardships of the rules and regulations passed under the Indian Councils Act of 1909, have been felt more keenly than in any other province. Some of the interpellations have been disallowed; some of the resolutions intended to be moved have been withheld; and the resolutions allowed to be discussed have been nearly always defeated, with the help of the standing phalanx of officials supported by the votes of several of the nominated members. On April 3rd, 1917, a resolution was moved in the Madras Legislative Council that, "it

be a recommendation to the Government that it should appoint non-official presidents of district boards in a few districts where suitable persons can be found." The Indian member of the Executive Council, who is in charge of the portfolio of the Local and Municipal Department, had to undertake on behalf of his colleagues the unenviable task of opposing such a moderate proposal; while he admitted that the principle was sound, he had yet to repeat the perpetual cry of the bureaucracy that, "the time is not yet" for the reform. The result was, as in many such cases, the resolution was lost by 20 against 19, the majority including the Governor, His Excellency Lord Pentland, himself and two of the elected non-official representatives.

The worst evil of the present system is best illustrated by the manner in which the Madras Legislative Council recently dealt with a recommendation made to the Government, that an enquiry be held into the economic condition of some typical villages. As was expected, even this modest demand was opposed by the member in charge; but fearing that the motion might be passed, a nominated member, an Anglo-Indian gentleman, came to the rescue of

the Government and moved "that the meeting do pass to the next business." Such a simple request for an inquiry affecting the well-being of the millions of the poor who live in the villages was shut out effectually by a subterfuge and with the help of the solid official votes.

No wonder that the non-official members of the Madras Legislative Council have realised the helplessness of the situation. The Hon. Rao Bahadur V. K. Ramanujachariar, who was for years in the service of the Government, and occupied the responsible post of Secretary to the Board of Revenue, in referring to the treatment meted out to him and his colleagues in the Council by the Government and its official representatives, said :—

We see shackles placed on our representations in regard to many points in which we are much interested. The Government have a practical majority in this Council; our resolutions are mere recommendations and there is no danger of Government being turned out of office. Why then this unwillingness to make us realise that we are engaged in the same work as Government are? If our arguments are weak, they carry their own condemnation; if strong, they must be useful and help disposal of business. A regard for our representation can only enhance the prestige of Government. I wish to point out that their cumulative effect is to discourage us in our attempt to work with Government in their every-day administration which is the basis of the Morley-Minto Reforms.

Here is the tale of woe of another member, the Hon. Rao Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao who has

had varied experience as Chairman of an important Municipality, as Vice-President of a Taluq Board and as a member of almost every important select Committee of the Legislative Council in which he has been serving for over three consecutive terms, and whose sobriety and moderation won for him, at the hands of a member of the Government, the honourable appellation of the "Madras Gokhale:"—

In 1912, ten resolutions were brought forward; only one proposing a diversion of expenditure of about Rs. 50,000 was found acceptable to the Government. In 1913, thirty-one resolutions were brought forward. None of them was agreeable to the Government. In 1914, similarly there were twenty resolutions which raised various points of financial administration but not even one was carried in this Council. In 1915, there were twenty-three resolutions, not a single one could be carried. In 1916, there were twenty-two resolutions, not a single one having been accepted. The result of the recent discussion held a few days ago is so near to us that I need not remind my hon. colleagues as to our achievements. We have done our best to persuade the Government to adopt a different financial policy, but we have not as yet succeeded in our attempt.

The working of the Legislative Council of the Province of Bengal seems to be no better, and yet it had the advantage till recently of being presided over by a noble-minded and sympathetic administrator like Lord Carmichael. In welcoming the other day his successor, Lord Ronaldshay, the Hon. Mr. Fazl-ul-Huq said:

We are in theory the chosen representatives of the people, but in shaping the policy of the administration, our voice in the councils of Government is of hardly more weight and value than that of the man in the moon.

Let us remember that this complaint comes from a Province, where the good Lord Carmichael had given his Council "an actual non-official majority." It is one more illustration of the evils of the present system. The *Bengalee*, in describing the recent Budget debate in the Bengal Legislative Council, wrote in its issue of the 6th April, 1917:

The prevailing note of the non-official Indian members is one of pessimism; and we fear that it is not confined to the Bengal Legislative Council. Throughout the country, in every province with a Legislative Council, the feeling of the non-official Indian members is that the measure of their performance is wholly inadequate to the measure of their efforts—there is much cry, but there is little wool. In the position in which they now are—in the position of minority even when there is a non-official majority—they feel that they can do very little, and there is a growing sense in the country, that these legislative assemblies are mere academic bodies which have to wait upon the pleasure of the Government for carrying out the popular behests.

Discussion of the financial statement of the Provinces is by far the most important work of the Legislative Councils. The non-official members of our Councils naturally devote considerable attention to this branch of their work, and yet we hear complaints from province after province that their labours in that direction are in vain. Here

is the criticism of the *Bengalee* (8th April, 1917) in regard to the recent Budget discussion in the Bengal Council:—

> No fewer than 34 resolutions were moved on the Budget in the session that has just closed, and with one exception they were all rejected or withdrawn, some of them receiving the unanimous support of the non-official Indian members. The main drift of these resolutions was to transfer money from the police to sanitation and education, the two great needs of all civilized communities. If accepted, they would not have upset the Budget—there was nothing revolutionary about them. But the Government had made up its mind, and apparently it seemed to involve loss of prestige for the Government to change its mind, even in small matters under the pressure of public opinion.

But the complaint of the non-official members of the Bengal Council does not stop here.

> It appears that, in 1916, Government had promised to supply non-official members with copies of Departmental Budgets. In pursuance of this promise, the Hon'ble Babu Akhil Chunder Datta had asked for the Departmental Budgets for the last two years. He was told in reply that copies were not available. Apart from the violation of the pledge of the Government, is it fair, we ask, to invite hon'ble members to discuss the Budget without giving them the amplest materials? The discussion is thus deprived of those living elements which contribute to its reality; it becomes superficial, and more or less a sham, and the Government is responsible for this result.

The fate of two resolutions moved during the course of the recent Budget debate in the Bengal Council proves that no improvement in the existing state of things can ever take place unless the

people's representatives have an effective control of finance.

The first of these two resolutions suggested that the starting pay of district munsiffs be raised. This measure, the Government were saying till recently, could not be introduced because the Public Services Commission had the matter in hand. But the report having now been published, the Government stated recently that they were considering the Commission's suggestions pending which they were unwilling to give effect to the proposal. The other resolution referred to the increase of the staff in the co-operative department, a measure of urgent necessity advocated by Sir Daniel Hamilton at the last Bengal Co-operative Conference and supported by the Conference itself.

The tale from the Central Provinces seems to be no better. Presiding at the second session of the Conference (held at Yeotmal in the first week of April 1917,) the Hon. Mr. N. K. Kelkar emphatically declared :—

Unless the composition of the Councils themselves is first thoroughly overhauled, a good deal of the advantage which might be expected from the criticism of these Councils would, I am afraid, be mostly of an illusory character.

The tendency on the part of the officials to restrict the scope and usefulness of the work of their non-official colleagues seems like a contagion to spread from province to province. Here is the statement of the Hon. Mr. V. J. Patel, made at the last meeting of the Bombay Legislative Council :—" I see nothing but distrust on the

part of the Government of non-official members, whom they have under the Rules to take on Committees."

On the result of the labours of the non-official members of the Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, we have the statement of the late Pundit Bishen Narayan Dhar:

> Nearly every resolution moved by the non-official Indian members of the United Provinces Council has been rejected—and rejected by overwhelming majorities; for, besides some of the elected members, the nominated members were always ready to support the Government.

At the last meeting of the United Provinces Council, the Hon Mr. Chintamani moved a resolution for the reduction of expenditure under civil works—provincial, by Rs. 75,000, adding this amount to the provision made for secondary schools—general. The resolution was of course rejected, but His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, who had threatened to disallow the resolution, allowed it to be discussed, but during the course of the debate remarked:—

> Under rule 13, said his Honour, resolutions should be directly relevant to some entry in the revised Financial Statement. The present resolution was no doubt directly relevant to the large total expenditure under civil works—provincial, but his Honour was not quite sure whether it should have been permitted without reference to more detailed items. On that point, however, his

Honour desired to make no final pronouncement but the matter would receive consideration. The second part of the resolution was also open to similar criticism. The hon. mover wished to add the amount to the provision made for secondary schools, general. It was not stated whether it should be added to the head education or under civil works, provincial, and the Council was left to conjecture what the hon. member's meaning was.

This sort of restriction was never contemplated by the Minto-Morley reforms; indeed, suggestions of a reduction of expenditure in civil works have now become very common, and nobody has till now considered it necessary to object to this procedure, that head of expenditure being able to bear any amount of reduction.

The following table (published in the *Hindu* of Madras) gives the number of financial resolutions moved in the various Councils during the Budget debates (April 1917) and explains their ultimate fate :—

Council.	*No. of Resolutions.*	*Withdrawn.*	*Rejected.*	*Accepted.*
India ...	3	2	1	nil
Madras ...	32	26	6	nil
Bengal ...	38	26	12	nil
United Provinces ...	22	10	12	nil
Bihar & Orissa ...	5	5	nil	nil
Central Provinces ...	4	2	2	nil
	104	71	33	nil

It will thus be seen that out of a total of 104 resolutions moved, there was not even one which the bureaucracy in its wisdom deemed fit to accept. Commenting on this extraordinary state of things, the *Hindu* rightly observes :—

Of course, abundance of oral sympathy was exhibited, but we refuse to take the distressing fact of not even one resolution having been adopted as a comment on the political sagacity and practical statesmanship of non-official members. On the contrary, the result exhibits a deplorable lack, on the part of officials, of appreciation of the public point of view of questions brought forward, uncommon imperviousness to non-official suggestions, and a mistaken faith in its own infallibility on the part of the Executive Government.

It is again most unfortunate that, of late, a tendency has been exhibited in more than one province to make an arbitrary use of the power of disallowing resolutions. The question of the annual exodus to the hills was allowed to be discussed in the Viceroy's Council and also in the United Provinces Legislative Council, and yet His Excellency Lord Pentland, the Governor of Madras, disallowed the discussion of this very same question.

It has also been sought to curtail and meddle in a narrow spirit, with the right of interpellation, from which much was expected. According to the English practice, "it is imperative that Parliament shall be duly informed of everything that may be necessary to explain the policy and

proceedings of Government in any part of the Empire, and the fullest information is communicated by Government to both Houses from time to time upon all matters of public interest," and when information is sought to be withheld, it is only when "public interests will suffer by their disclosure." But if any attempt were made by the Government to abuse this privilege the aggrieved member "can move the adjournment of the House, or move a resolution, asking the Minister to furnish the information." But as has been truly observed :

The powers of interpellation given to members of the Legislatures in India proceed on the reverse principle that the Government is not bound to give any information except such as it deems necessary to give in the public interest.

The great claim of the Minto-Morley reforms was that they were designed "to entrúst to the Indian peoples a greater share in legislation and Government," and "to really and effectively associate the people of India in the work, not only of occasional legislation, but of actual every-day administration."

But Indian officialdom, high and low, seems to fight shy of an increased number of meetings of the Legislative Council. The Hon. Pandit M. M. Malaviya's resolution in the Imperial Council for more meetings of that body was opposed

strongly by the officials, and the reason given by one of the official members was "either he (the Member of the Executive Council) must do double work, treble work or even more, or else you must multiply the number of Executive Members." If, despite the addition of Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries to the Government of India, further addition to the numbers be deemed necessary, it might certainly be made with advantage; the statement, even if it were true, that the burden of the officials would be increased, cannot be a reason for denying the people's representatives more frequent opportunities to ventilate public grievances. Surely the Civil Service exists for the service of the people and not the people for the convenience of that service. In the Madras Legislative Council a recommendation made by a non-official member that not less than eight meetings of the Local Council should be summoned in a year was stoutly opposed. The opposition, of course, was expected. But it is interesting to know the reasons given by H. E. Lord Pentland, the head of the Province :—

The Legislative Council was not an expensive toy. It was not merely a debating assembly. It was an assembly which had for its purpose the assistance of them all in considering questions connected with the administra-

tion of the country, and it ought to be directed to all practical purposes for that assistance.

Not content with this, His Excellency thought it fit to state in open Council:

Every question needlessly framed, every resolution brought up which had no substance in it, took up time which meant public money:

and this is the homily administered to the non-official members of the Madras Legislative Council, several of whom are busy professional men, who have been for years systematically making a sacrifice of their time and money in devoting themselves to public work.

THE BUREAUCRACY AND THE REFORMS.

The plain truth is that Lord Morley's reform scheme became law because Lord Minto realised the true character of the situation and insisted upon it. The Indian bureaucracy never welcomed it; for the matter of that, they have never countenanced any measure of reform which made an inroad on their rights and privileges. The situation was truly and effectively described by Pandit Bishen Narayan Dhar in his presidential address to the Indian National Congress held at Calcutta in 1911:—

The first draft scheme published by the Government of India was their (bureaucracy) handiwork and was at once condemned by the Indian public. Lord Morley

transformed it into a more liberal and popular scheme. The point, however, is that the policy of reform did not originate with them. On the contrary it was opposed by them.

The bureaucracy, which had been accustomed to govern with all its prestige and power, was unwilling to part with any portion of it and share any of their rights with the representatives of the people. That this was the actual state of affairs could be substantiated by the fact that Sir Edward Baker, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, in his speech at the Bengal Council meeting, had to make the following special appeal to the Civil Service :—

I hold that a solemn duty rests upon the officers of Government in all branches, and more particularly upon the officers of the Civil Service, so to comport themselves in the inception and working of the new measures as to make the task of the people and their leaders easy. It is incumbent upon them loyally to accept the principle that these measures involve—the surrender of some portion of the authority and control which they now exercise, and some modifications of the methods of administration. If that task is approached in a grudging or reluctant spirit, we shall be sowing the seeds of failure, and shall forfeit our claim to receive the friendly co-operation of the representatives of the people. We must be prepared to support, defend, and carry through the administrative policy, and in a certain degree even the executive acts of the Government in the Council, in much the same way as is now prescribed in regard to measures of legislation; and we must further be prepared to discharge this task without the aid of a standing majority behind us. We will have to resort to the more difficult arts of persuasion and conciliation, in the place of the easier methods of autocracy. This is no

small demand to make on the resources of a service whose training and traditions have hitherto led its members rather to work for the people, than through the people or their representatives. But I am nevertheless confident that the demand will not be made in vain. For more than a hundred years, in the time of the Company and under the rule of the Crown, the Indian Civil Service has never failed to respond to whatever call has been made upon it or to adapt itself to the changing environment of the time. I feel no doubt that officers will be found who possess the natural gifts, the loyalty, the imagination, and the force of character which will be requisite for the conduct of the administration under the more advanced form of government to which we are about to succeed.

Can anyone, who has watched the course of events in the country since the Minto-Morley reforms, truly say that there has been any perceptible change in the attitude of the bureaucracy to non-official public opinion? Indeed, there are some who go so far as to aver that even the war, which is supposed to have materially changed the angle of vision, has effected little or no change in the official attitude in India. Sir Edward Baker's appeal to the Civil Service "to resort to the more difficult arts of persuasion and conciliation, in the place of the easier methods of autocracy," has been, generally speaking, an appeal made in vain. Not only has a systematic attempt been made to disregard and defeat the resolutions brought forward by the non-official representatives of the people, but time after time the Civil Service officials

have added insult to injury by making the preposterous claim that they are truer representatives of the people—the toiling masses—and that they take better care of their interests and welfare than the educated non-officials. Everyone knows that the distinction sought to be made is as mischievous as it is "unreal and ridiculous." Everybody knows that many an English official, "standing in a proud and sometimes contemptuous isolation which prevents him from ever acquiring a real hold over the facts of native life," and with his unmanageable jaw "which never helps him to acquire anything distinctly approaching to a living knowledge of the language of the people," often "betrays the most startling inability to enter into and comprehend the simplest facts of native life and native thought."*

It is absurd that a foreign bureaucracy, for the most part ignorant of the language of the people and unacquainted with the feelings and thoughts of the people, their ways of life, their ambitions and aspirations, should pose as their friend and as intimately acquainted with them and deny to their educated brethren, who are born of the people, are bred up among the people, and live among the peo-

* From a speech of the late Sir P. M. Mehta.

ple, the right to speak for them. The Anglo-Indian frame of mind has been well described by Sir Auckland Colvin, when he says : " The English mind in India has been tempted to stand still, arrested by the contemplation of the fruits of its efforts in former times and by the symmetry of the shrine, the pride of its own creation in which it lingers to offer incense to its past successful labours," and the Civil Service makes it a grievance when it is criticised, failing to realise that the days of the benevolent and unquestioned autocrat are over.

What is particularly annoying to the officials in the present situation is well portrayed by Mr. J. A. Spender, of the *Westminster Gazette*, in his remarkable book, *The Indian Scene*, written soon after his visit to India during the time of the Delhi Durbar :—

Every step that the Government takes has to be argued and justified to the Legislative Councils, the native press, the bazaar, the increasing number of young Indians who have imbibed Western ideas. To many of the older officials—excellent men whose services can scarcely be exaggerated—the process seems equally disagreeable and undignified. It was not in their contract that they should have to come out of their sanctums and enter into argument with glib Babus, who will perhaps beat them at the word game. Their ideal was that of the silent efficient with no capacity for public speaking. Anglo-India works with the pen and piles up mountains of memoranda (many of which go for ever unread), and it has a corresponding contempt

for the man who is effective with his tongue, for the Parliamentarian, the platform orator, the Congress speaker. So far is this driven that positive incapacity for public speaking seems to be counted a virtue; and among the more conservative the opinion is freely expressed that the Service is ceasing to be an occupation for gentlemen and scholars.

Hence the present state of things cannot continue any longer without causing grave injury to the interests of the people and of the Government itself. The nineteen non-official members of the Viceroy's Council state but the bare fact when they observe that "the people or their representatives are practically as little associated with the real government of their country as they were before the reforms."

REFORMS URGED BY CONGRESS & MOSLEM LEAGUE.

Their memorandum and the scheme of reforms, unanimously adopted by the Congress and the Moslem League, rightly lay down that in the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils four-fifths of the members should be elected. Both the documents point to the urgent need there is for having a substantial majority of elected representatives in the Imperial and Provincial Councils; for "the one general objection which applies to all the Councils is, that the non-official majority is composed of both elected and

nominated members which, as the Councils are now constituted, means a standing and, indeed, an overwhelming official majority in every one of them," and Lord Morley certainly never dreamt of this sort of non-official majority when he granted us the concession. His intention was to give us a substantial non-official majority. . . . . . As proof of this, we would point out that in the speech he delivered in the House of Lords, on December 17, 1908, on the proposed constitutional reforms justifying the proposal to do away with the standing official majorities in the Provincial Legislative Councils, Lord Morley observed :—

But anybody can see how directly, how palpably, how injuriously, an arrangement of this kind tends to weaken and, I think I may say, even to deaden the sense, both of trust and responsibility in the non-official members of these Councils. Anybody can see how the system tends to throw the non-official member into an attitude of peevish, sulky, permanent opposition and, therefore, has an injurious effect on the minds and characters of members of these Legislative Councils.

Almost every non-official Indian member who has sat in the reformed Councils is of opinion that the so-called non-official majority in the Provincial Councils as "a delusion and a snare," and it is somewhat significant to note that when the Bill was discussed in the House of Lords and in the House

of Commons, Lord Ampthill stated that the non-official majority was not an actual one but only seeming, but Earl Percy went so far as to say, "it was a sham."

ELECTED MAJORITY IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS.

If any improvement is to be effected in the existing state of things, the non-officials must have a substantial elected majority in the Councils. The increase in the numbers suggested for both the Councils is certainly not too large considering the great strides the country has made in recent years and the vast and varied interests to be effectively represented.

The scheme also formulates reasonable proposals for obtaining "not merely a nominal but a living representation" of the people in the Councils of the country on as broad a franchise as possible, giving at the same time every facility for the representation of important minorities.

COUNCIL TO ELECT ITS OWN PRESIDENT.

Besides possessing a substantial non-official elected majority, every Council must have the right of electing its own President. For it is essential that discussion should be free and unfettered, and every Member of the Council should be made to feel that when he is in the Council

he is there to speak out his mind freely and unreservedly on the questions that come before it for deliberation. As things are, the permanent officials insist upon their time-honoured privilege of deciding what is good for the people, while the legitimate claim of the non-officials to represent the grievances, the wants and aspirations of their own countrymen is disregarded and even scouted. Even Governors of Provinces, though Britishers fresh from England, fall into the hands of the bureaucracy; and things are often presented to them by the official hierarchy in such a light that they are induced to stand by their colleagues, to partake in the discussion in the spirit of partisans, and often use their influence to secure a majority on their side, and so we have the sad phenomenon of officialdom having the upper hand in Lord Morley's reformed Legislative Councils, when the intentions of the scheme were to secure just the opposite effect. Debates and discussions carried on under such disheartening conditions cannot in the nature of things be of any real value.

RESOLUTIONS TO BIND THE EXECUTIVE.

But a mere increase in the numbers of these Councils will certainly not make for any appreci-

able improvement. It is a matter of despair to the representatives of the people to devote their time and talents to a study of the problems of administration and move resolutions in the Councils, only to have the bulk of them thrown out and the few, even if carried, not to be binding on the executive. The non-officials cannot have their heart in the work when, as they have known to their cost, it is in the power of the permanent officials to brush them aside and refuse to act upon them at all. The following complaint was made by the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya—and what he says of resolutions proposed in the Imperial Council applies with even greater force to those of the Provinces:—

We have moved resolution after resolution in the Imperial Council and, except when the Government has seen it fit to accept a resolution moved by us, every one of them has been rejected. We feel that this is an intolerable situation. We are certain we are not less interested and less honestly anxious for the welfare of our own country and countrymen, than our esteemed European friends of the Executive Council are. It is they who decide whether a resolution passed by the Legislative Council shall be accepted or shall not be accepted. If I may tell you in confidence, often it is not the Executive Government as a whole, which decides it. If is often the secretary of the department or the member or both of them that decide whether a resolution shall be accepted or not. It does not go even to the Executive Council. Whatever decision is arrived at by

the secretary and the member is accepted by the rest of the Executive Council. That is the state of affairs, and the result is, that our most earnest endeavours to push forward the reform in domestic matters in various ways are frustrated.

The Congress-Moslem League Scheme, therefore, provides that a resolution passed by the Legislative Council should be binding on the Executive Government, and with a view to effectively guard against action on any hasty or ill-conceived decision, the power of veto is vested in the Governor-in-Council. If, however, this same resolution, after an interval of not less than one year, be again brought forward before the Council, discussed and carried by a majority, it must be given effect to, because it will then be the twice considered and mature decision of that body.

HALF OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO CONSIST OF INDIANS.

If then, the decisions of the Legislative Council are to be binding on the Executive and its behests enforced, it follows logically that the members should command the confidence of the Legislature; but having regard to our existing conditions, the Congress and the League Scheme will, for the present, be content with a reform which will secure that at least one-half of the members of the Executive Council

shall consist of Indians to be elected by the elected members of the Provincial Legislative Council. The experiment of the admission of two Indians in the Council of the Secretary of State for India, the inclusion of an Indian member in the Executive Councils of the Viceroy and the Provincial Governments has proved a success, an unqualified success, and we have this on the authority of Lord Morley, Mr. Charles Roberts, Lord Minto, Lord Hardinge, Lord Carmichael, and Lord Pentland.

Referring to the services rendered by the two Indian members of his Council, Lord Morley said :—

Those apprehensions regarding this new experiment have been utterly dissipated. The concord between the two Indian members of the Council and their colleagues has been unbroken, their work has been excellent, and you will readily believe me when I say that the advantage to me of being able to ask one of these two gentlemen to come and tell me something about an Indian question from an Indian point of view is enormous. I find in it a chance of getting the Indian angle of vision, and I feel sometimes as if I was actually in the streets of Calcutta.

Speaking at a banquet in honour of Sir K. G. Gupta, Mr. Charles Roberts, the then Under-Secretary of State for India, said :—

It (the appointment of Indians to the India Coun was not an experiment to-day. It was an undoub success accepted as a matter of course. That India

should be on the Council was not merely desirable. It was, he believed, indispensable for the right government of India.

Lord Minto, speaking at the United Service Club, in 1910, gave the following testimony to the services rendered by Sir S. P. Sinha in his Council :—

I cannot let this opportunity pass without bearing testimony to the able assistance he has rendered to the Government of India and thanking him for the absolute fairness and broad-minded patriotism which has always characterised the advice I have so often sought from him.

Lord Hardinge paid eloquent tributes of praise to Sir Syed Ali Imam more than once :—

As a member of my Council, I repeat, the presence of Sir Ali Imam has been an asset of the utmost value, and it was a source of unmitigated satisfaction to me the other day to pay him the greatest compliment at my disposal by appointing him Vice-President of my Council.

At a memorial meeting held at Madras in honour of the late Mr. V. Krishnaswami Aiyar, Sir Murray Hammick said :—

I learnt to admire his genius, his extraordinary quickness, and, above all, his intense anxiety to be just to all men and to do what he thought best for the welfare and advancement of his country.

Sir John Atkinson said at the same meeting :—

He had no administrative experience when he joined the Government. As he himself said to me a day or two after that event he was only a learner. But what a learner! It was astonishing how rapidly he mastered

not only the methods of the Secretariat procedure but the substance and intricacies of all the many complicated questions submitted to him.

Only on February 27, 1917, on the eve of the retirement of Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar from the Madras Executive Council, the Government of Madras published the following appreciation of his services :—

H. E. the Governor in Council desires to place on record his warm appreciation of the valuable services which the Hon'ble Sir P. S Sivaswamy Iyer has rendered to the State during the term of his office. Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyar's intimate knowledge of the needs and aspirations of the people of India and his distinguished legal attainments have been of the greatest assistance to His Excellency in Council, while his high sense of duty and genial disposition have secured for him the respect and affection of all.

As late as March 17, His Excellency Lord Carmichael, replying to the farewell address presented by the Central Mahomedan Association, paid a tribute to Sir Syed Shams-ul-Huda :—

Throughout the last two and a half years, when the action of Turkey had sorely tried the feelings of so many Mahomedans, feelings with which I have the profoundest sympathy, Sir Shams-ul-Huda had been of immeasurable value to me.

The case for the necessity for at least one-half of the number of Members of the Executive Councils being Indians is easily made out.

The Government which recognised the wisdom and justice of admitting an Indian into the Exe-

cutive Councils of the Viceroy and the Provincial rulers could certainly, with advantage to itself and the people, add one more to each of them. It would be idle to conceal the fact that the Indian member in every Council often finds himself in a minority while his two colleagues, the permanent officials, the representatives of the Civil Service, with their vested interests, rights and privileges constitute what amounts to a standing majority against him. If there should be two Indian members, to match the two civilians, the Governor of the Province will be obliged to go fully into every question and take upon himself the responsibility of deciding those questions where his Indian and civilian colleagues happen to differ. Such a system will certainly help the administration better than the one now in vogue according to which, when the civilian members agree on a question and so form a practical majority, the head of the Province almost invariably accepts their decision as a matter of course. The impotence of the Indian member is greatly aggravated in the case of the Viceroy's Executive Council. Sir Ali Imam made this plain when he declared that but for the countenance and support that it was his exceptional good fortune to enjoy

at the hands of the Viceroy, his position might have easily become intolerable. Even assuming that the same good fortune attends the present occupant of the place, which there is in fact much reason to doubt, it will be obviously due to accidental and personal causes and can not afford a guarantee that the Indian view of vital questions has an adequate chance of asserting itself. A touch of humiliation is added to the impotence caused by the situation by the extraordinary power given to a Secretary, almost invariably a civilian, of referring such orders of a member of Council as he may not approve of, to the opinion of the Viceroy or, in the case of Provincial Governments, to any other Member—a power which may be so exercised as to reduce the Indian Member in all important matters to a mere figurehead.

CIVIL SERVANTS AND THE EXECUTIVE COUNCILS.

The proper arrangement would be to exclude the Civil Service element altogether from the Executive Councils of the Viceroy and the headships of Local Administrations. For it is well known that none of them is at present master in his own household, and their cabinet "is unduly dominated by a group

of permanent officials who enter the Executive Councils automatically, imbued with the spirit of the great centralised departments over which they have been accustomed to preside." For Viceroys and Governors, fresh from home, with every desire to liberalise their administration, find themselves hopelessly unable to give effect to the policy which they would like to follow, if left to themselves. All over the civilised world the permanent official is excluded from a place in the cabinet of his country. It would certainly be no injustice to ask the Indian Civil Servant, following the example of other countries, "to close his official career as the trusted and authoritative head of his department without aspiring to political governance."*

Everywhere else the services have simply to carry out the policy of the Government and discharge efficiently the duties they are called upon to do; but in India the Civil Service not only dominates the every-day administration of the country but dictates and enforces its own policy. As has been truly remarked, "In India the term Service is a misnomer; for the Service

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* Sir William Wedderburn. Quoted in full in page 46. *Indian Demands.*

and the State are interchangeable, or, more correctly speaking, the one is entirely lost in the other,"* and if the popular will is at all to prevail in the Councils of the Provinces, it should be a condition precedent that if the Civil Service element could not altogether be excluded from them, the Indian element should at least be equal in number to it.

If the suggestion of the Congress and the Moslem League, that members of the Indian Civil Service should not ordinarily be appointed to the Executive Councils, be accepted, it will enable the Viceroy and the Local Governors "to nominate the members of his own Executive Council from among men, British and Indian, of ripe experience in public affairs."

CONTROL OVER THE BUDGET.

You may have a Legislative Council with a substantial non-official majority; your resolutions may even be made binding on the Executive; you may provide that one-half of the members of the Council should be Indians. But if the Legislative Councils have no control over the Budget, and the Executive has the right of disposing of your

* Page 336, "Indian National Evolution" by Amvica Charan Mazumdar.

monies, you will have made no real advance in the reform of the Legislative Councils.

It is certainly not an unreasonable demand that the representatives of the people should have control over the people's money, for that is the one means of compelling the Executive to carry out the will of the people. Students of the English constitution need hardly be reminded that from the time of Edward I, when the first Parliament was formed, the power of the purse has been in the hands of the House of Commons. It was that weapon which ultimately enabled England to obtain the well ordered freedom which she now so deservedly enjoys.

The well known writer on public finance, Mr. H. C. Adams, observes, "Money is the vital principle of the body politic. He who controls the finances of the State controls the nation's policy. Constitutionalism is the idea, budgets are the means, by which that idea is realised." This is the true description of the relation that should subsist between finance and constitutional Government. "One of the fundamental principles of every State that either recognises constitutional limitations or purports to develop a constitutional form of government, is the vesting of

some measure of control of the public purse in the representatives of the people." This control is usually exercised through the Budget, which is presented by the Executive to the Legislature, wherein the representatives of the people use their efforts "to ensure that care and economy are secured in the finances of the nation." Our Councils, constituted as at present, have no control over the national purse.

In the Despatch which the Government of India sent to the Secretary of State in October 1911, they took care to insist upon one proposition as a constitutional fact, namely, that the power of passing the Budget is vested not in the Legislative Council, but in the Executive, and that it is the latter and not the former that decides any question arising on the Budget. There can be no doubt that, under the law, there is no power in the Legislative Council to claim, to meddle with the Financial Statement of the Governor-General in Council. If the constitutional proposition enunciated by the Government of India were accepted literally, it would mean that the Legislative Council has no control over either the raising of revenue or the incurring of expenditure.—*A. R. Aiyangar's "Indian Constitution."*

Our representatives can claim no right to determine the sources of revenue nor even the annual expenditure. They can only make a recommendation to the Executive in the form of a resolution that certain expenditure need or need not be incurred. But the fate which generally awaits resolutions by non-official members has already been described.

And it is no wonder that several of the non-official legislative councillors seem to think that their labours in discussing the financial statement are more or less a farce. The Hon. Mr. Abdul Rasul, speaking at the Bengal Legislative Council on the 3rd of April, spoke as follows :—

He wished to say a few words about the futility of the Budget debate. After all they were not allowed to vote on the Budget. They were allowed to make long speeches, and hon. members of the Executive Council replied to them. Those speeches usually referred to matters which had been fully debated on the financial statement. What was the use of repeating those arguments again and again ? He would suggest that the procedure should be amended, and that on the day fixed for the Budget debate, there should be no debate at all. After all they had to accept the Budget, and what was the use of all these discussions ? Instead of that debate he thought there should be a longer time between the introduction of the financial statement and the day on which they could move resolutions, so that they could not only speak but vote and show their strength. It was true that those resolutions were usually defeated, and often because the European members thought that in season and out of season they must support the Government.

In the same Council, the Hon. Mr. Fazl-ul-Huq began his Budget speech with the following interesting observation, the humour of which will be appreciated :—

I know of a deputy magistrate who was so fully convinced of the infallibility of his judicial wisdom, that he used to write out his judgments beforehand, and then amuse himself by calling upon pleaders and mukhtears to argue the case. The practice of calling upon the non-

official members of this Council to discuss an unchangeable and unalterable Budget seems to be as much justified as that followed by this deputy magistrate.

The Hon. Mr. Ambika Charan Mazumdar made a similar complaint but in much stronger terms, and it is as follows :—

My Lord, it is sickening to contemplate that no less than thirty-four resolutions were moved by non-official members on the financial statement; but with the solitary exception of one small resolution, for which the Hon'ble Mr. Hornell must be thanked, they were all stubbornly resisted and rejected by Government. In two cases they were negatived by the bare casting vote of the vice-president in the chair. Surely this ought to be sufficient to break the backbone of even the most obdurate optimist in Your Excellency's Council with of course the exception of those who, either paid or unpaid, hold a brief for the Government.

The Hon. Mr. V. J. Patel, of the Bombay Legislative Council, put the whole case in a nutshell when he observed :—

My Lord, after all is said and done, what is the amount of control that we non-official members possess over the financial proposals of Government? . . . We non-official members have merely the privilege of bringing forward proposals and moving resolutions. If this small privilege is thus encroached upon, then no wonder the Morley-Minto Reform Scheme is regarded as a failure. I have read the despatches of both Lords Morley and Minto on which these Financial Rules are based, and I can confidently tell this Council that the liberal spirit pervading throughout these documents is lacking in practice.

The justice of India's claim to have the control of its finances was recognized by Sir William Hunter, when he said :—

I cannot believe that a people numbering one-sixth of the whole inhabitants of the globe, and whose aspirations have been nourished from their earliest youth on the strong food of English liberty, can be permanently denied a voice in the government of their country. I do not believe that races. . . . . . into whom we have instilled the maxim of "No taxation without representation" as a fundamental right of a people, can be permanently excluded from a share in the management of their finances.

FISCAL INDEPENDENCE.

The power to raise revenue of course includes what is known as fiscal independence, but this requires special mention in the case of India, owing to the free trade policy enforced on her by the British suzerain authority. Our contention has been that this free-trade policy is ruinous to the industrial and economic welfare of our people and is maintained for the benefit of the British manufacturer and merchant. The imposition of a duty of 7½ per cent. on imported cotton goods recently by the Government of India is the first breach in the free-trade wall and will, it is hoped, lead ere long to the recognition of the right of India, as in the case of the self-governing dominions, to regulate her tariff in her own interests so as to develop her resources for her own advantage. Eloquent pleas were made in this behalf in the recent session of the Imperial Legis-

lative Council during the Budget debate. One of these, that of the Hon. Mr. Srinivasa Sastri, may be transcribed in this place :—

One great feature of this Budget, my lord, is the import duty on cotton. For the first time we are feeling that a great injustice has been removed, and we are hoping that further steps in the same direction will be taken for the general relief of the tax-payer. This is in the direction of fiscal autonomy which has been the pole-star of commercial and economic aspiration in this country for two generations. We feel that we are subservient economically to outsiders, that we cannot develop our resources to the full to our own advantage, and as on this occasion we rejoice that we have taken the first step, so it would be a calamity indeed if this step had to be retraced owing to the pressure of Lancashire.

The debate in the House of Commons has fully disclosed the existence of a danger against which we desire to forearm ourselves. It is, my lord, a matter of particular gratification that the Secretary of State has seized the essence of the point and put it in forcible language which we cannot improve upon. The impost on cotton goods is a social necessity for India, it is a political necessity for India, it is an industrial necessity for India. I am glad to acknowledge that I have noticed the spirit of anger and indignation with which not merely Indians but even Englishmen in this country have read the report of the proceedings in the House of Commons.

They feel that even when bare justice is, under the inexorable necessity of war, done to India, there are a class of people in England whose selfishness drives them to raise an untimely word of protest. As I said it has been bare justice—I take the leave of the Council to go another step and affirm that it is now, after the immense war-gift we have made to Englad and the additional taxation that we are for that purpose bearing, that it is after this an obligation that England owes to us to set us free to so stand upon our own legs in the matter of fiscal development. For after all I do not mind how much we pay out of the available and hoarded wealth of the

country; let our accumulations, let our disposable goods be all taken, provided we have the power of creating wealth again, so that we can use such resources as we have to the fullest advantage of this country. Fiscal autonomy, then, has become not merely justice to be pleaded for, but a necessity that England cannot any more withhold. I wish your Excellency's Government to make the matter clear as the unanimous wish of this Council to the representatives of our Government at Home.

WORK OF THE NON-OFFICIALS.

It speaks volumes in praise of the patience and public spirit displayed by the non-official members of the legislative councils that, under the most trying and disheartening conditions and "chafing every time at the restrictions placed upon their activity and their usefulness," they should have won the praises of Viceroys and Governors of Provinces for their moderation and self-restraint and for the advice they have given to the Government from time to time. It would be wrong to say that non-official criticism and advice have been without effect on the policy and administration of the country, but as it has been repeatedly pointed out "so high is the expectation which the public entertain now-a-days of the legislative councils, and so keen is their sense of the impotence of their representatives from a constitutional point of view

that nothing *can satisfy them hereafter short of the power of regulating the policy, disposing of the finances and controlling the Executive.*"

THE CONGRESS AND LEAGUE SCHEME IN BRIEF.

Such is to a large extent the nature of the reforms sought to be made in the constitution of Legislative Councils by the Congress and the Moslem Scheme. The entire scheme itself may thus be briefly summarised :

The King-Emperor will govern India through a Viceroy assisted by an Executive Council, composed of six persons, three Indian and three European. The European members will be appointed by the Viceroy, but need not be chosen from the Indian Civil Service or any other Service in India. The Indian members are to be elected by the elected members of the Viceroy's Legislative Council. The Council of the Secretary of State being abolished, and he being reduced to the status of the Colonial Secretary, all control over the Executive will be exercised by the Legislative Council in India. It will be enlarged to about 150, four-fifths of whom will be elected by the people of the country on a direct franchise, Mahomedans being entitled to a certain percentage of these seats through separate electorates of their own. The members of the Executive Council will be *ex officio* members of the Legislative Council, and the Viceroy will nominate the remaining members from officials as well as non-officials. The Council will enjoy the power of legislation for all India subject to the veto of the Viceroy and to disallowance by the Crown within a certain period. The Council will be competent to interpellate the Executive in the same way as members of Parliament do in England, and to pass resolutions which may be vetoed by the Viceroy in Council but shall be binding on the Exe-

cutive Government if reaffirmed substantially after one year of such veto. The Council will elect its own Speaker. Its duration like that of the members of the Executive Government will be five years. The Viceroy may dissolve it before its time, but he must summon another Council within a certain period. No more than one year should elapse between one meeting of the Council and another. As to finance, the Executive Government will frame the proposals for each year which will be discussed by the Legislative Council and must be passed in the shape of money Bills. The expenditure on the army and the navy, however, shall not be subject to the sanction of the legislature. The Government of the Provinces is to be more or less on the same lines. Each Province should have a Governor appointed directly by the Crown. Provincial legislation will be subject to the veto of the Governor and to disallowance by the Governor-General. The financial relations between the Government of India and the Provincial Governments are not fully worked out; but the general idea is that there should be a division of the revenues into Imperial and Provincial, and that for deficiencies in the Imperial Budget the Provinces shall be called upon to make contributions on principles to be settled from time to time.*

The scheme itself "falls short of responsible government as understood in the Dominions," and the framers of the scheme have deliberately avoided the full parliamentary system as unsuitable to the present condition of India. More important still, under the scheme, the expenditure on the army and the navy will vest in the Government of India only. Any impartial critic will therefore

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* *Self-Government for India under the British Flag*. By the Hon. Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri.

see that what India aims at now "would rank distinctly below the Colonial standard and even below the Irish." The truth is our scheme is but "a half-way house," and as pointed out in the *Memorandum* * submitted to the Secretary of State for India by the Joint Conference of the All-India Congress Committee and the Council of the Moslem League:

> This scheme does not ask for "full and responsible Self-Government" or "complete autonomy for India at the close of the war," but asks for certain necessary constitutional reforms, in the existing system of the Government of India which if carried out would only constitute a definite step in the direction of self-government for India within the Empire.

But that is because politicians have throughout carefully borne in mind the peculiar conditions in which India finds herself at the present day.

INDIA AFTER THE WAR.

It will be nothing short of political folly to suppose even for a moment that the Indian people, who have for many long years before the war been strenuously agitating for these changes, will in any manner minimise their demands after the war; on the other hand, the claims of India are bound to be larger, incomparably stronger and

* Submitted to the Secretary of State for India on the 28th July, 1917.

louder for her proper place in the Empire. If any one has any doubts on this point, he has only to recall the extraordinary political state of the country, the character of the unrest which preceded the introduction of the Minto-Morley reforms. If at that time the Indian people accepted the changes then made in the Government of India, it was because the Reforms gave a clear indication that Indians would be admitted into the inner counsels of the Empire, and it is well to remember that the whole country regarded them as only the first instalment of the great changes that were sooner or later bound to be made in the government of the country. The scheme formulated by the nineteen non-official elected members of the Imperial Legislative Council and amplified and adopted by the Congress and the Moslem League, is nothing but the logical outcome of the working of Lord Morley's reforms. It contemplates no violent changes, and there is certainly no breaking with the past. It claims, in short, the fulfilment of pledges and promises solemnly made that, "India should be so governed as to enable the Indian people to govern themselves according to the higher standards of the West."

There is no use concealing the fact that "hitherto the policy of England in India has been, to a very large extent, dominated by a fear for the security of British rule." India's magnificent conduct in the present war has proved not only to Great Britain but to her enemies as well how unjust the suspicion has been, and the war has brought to Englishmen as a body the opportunity "to boldly face the realities of the situation in India and to base their government on the will of the people." These reforms are due to us not as the price of our loyalty, and we spurn the very suggestion, but as reforms too long delayed on account of unjust suspicion and distrust, and on account of the unwillingness of those who have been in power to part with vested rights and privileges. Since the Minto-Morley Reforms much water has flown under the bridge, and even Lord Morley himself could not have foreseen the tremendous outburst of loyalty and enthusiasm which the present war has evoked from the princes and the people of India for the British Throne, and for the cause which it is upholding and for which it is fighting at such heavy cost. India has given freely of her money and her blood for the struggle, because she is convinced that in

this war Great Britain is "engaged in a mortal combat with despotism, to vindicate the principle of self-government not merely for itself but also for mankind," and that the failure of Great Britain in this titanic struggle means the destruction of self-government and the annihilation of the principle of nationality. And that is why the princes and people of the land are cheerfully making the sacrifices they do to keep the cause for which Great Britain stands "inviolate." Great Britain is "fighting now to the death against the claim of a single nation or race to impose its civilisation on the world and to dominate the other nations of Europe." "If it is wrong for Germany to attempt to impose her *kultur* upon unwilling nations, it is equally wrong for England to attempt to impose her government and civilisation upon India against the will of the Indian people." "*We cannot fight for one set of principles in Europe and apply another set of principles in India.*"* It will not do at this time of the day to advise the Indian people to keep quiet and contented, and bid them worship the "gods" that

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* The Lord Bishop of Madras in a recent contribution to the *Nineteenth Century and After.*

have given them a rule much more efficient than any Indian rule can be. A good government does not always mean a popular government, and Englishmen, who try to think differently for India, must remember the famous dictum of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman that "good government is no substitute for self-government."

What India aspires to is what President Lincoln described as "government of the people, for the people and by the people."

In his *Problem of the Commonwealth* Mr. Lionel Curtis claims that "the task of preparing for freedom the races which cannot as yet govern themselves is the supreme duty of those who can. It is the spiritual end for which the Commonwealth exists, and material order is nothing except a means to it." While denying the suggestion that we are unfit to govern ourselves we are willing to admit it for the moment and we, therefore, ask the British nation to declare that Self-Government is to be our goal and that it should undertake its high spiritual task of fitting us for it without any further delay. In Canada, in Australia, in New Zealand and in South Africa the grant of Self-Government has proved a blessing to the Dominions and

to, the mother country. And as has been forcefully pointed out by the Hon. Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri in his admirable little book on *Self-Government for India under the British Flag*, "the grant of responsible government, wherever it has been made, has only strengthened the bond between the suzerain power and the subordinate but autonomous governments—a lesson which may well be borne in mind by those prophets of evil who prognosticate that in India political generosity will be met with ingratitude."

Strangely enough the prophets of evil are the very people who hold all the power, who insist on all the prestige of their office, who cling passionately to its rights, its privileges and its emoluments and yet deny the sons of the soil their claim to a legitimate share in the government of the country.

Only very lately Mr. Bernard Houghton, a retired Indian Civilian, placed on record his opinion :—

> Few men give up voluntarily powers which they have long wielded. 'No men in the world are impartial judges when their interests are concerned.' No bureaucracy will voluntarily abdicate powers, however irksome to the common people, which conduce to the convenience of officials, or which strengthen their grip upon the country.

There is no use forgetting the fact "that the conditions which necessitated and justified, an official autocracy, administered by a privileged class of foreigners, have long passed away; that at the altar of prestige and efficiency "which means the perfecting of the official machine and completing its dominion over the outside public" too much of valuable sacrifice has already been made, that the present system perpetuates "a kind of dwarfing or stunting of the Indian race" and compels all of us "to live all the days of our life in an atmosphere of inferiority,"* a system which has assigned to us the lot of "hewers of wood and drawers of water in our own country," and has drawn forth the painful statement in the pages of the Report of a Royal Commission from the pen of an Indian Member of the Executive Council: "*that every Indian officer whether high or low, feels that he is not serving himself or his country but is an individual hired to labour for somebody else.*"† The late Sir Henry Cotton who used to recall with

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* Mr. Gokhale in his evidence before the Welby Commission.

† The Hon. Mr. Chaubal in his Note on the Report of the Public Services Commission.

commendable pride the fact that, for a hundred years, his family had been members of the Indian Civil Service, very rightly observed, " the Indian Civil Service is moribund and must pass away after a prolonged period of magnificent work to be replaced by a more popular system which will perpetuate its efficiency while avoiding its defects."*

Recent events and more especially the report of the Mesopotamian Commission have made it abundantly clear that even the claims of efficiency can no longer be made on behalf of the Bureaucracy in India. Mr. Montagu, the present Secretary of State for India, speaking in the House of Commons on 12th July 1917, during the debate on the Report of the Mesopotamian Commission was not in the least overstating the case against the present system when he observed:

> But I am positive of this, that your great claim to continue the illogical system of Government by which you have governed India in the past is that it was efficient. It has been proved to be not efficient. *It has been proved to be not sufficiently elastic to express the will of the Indian people*; to make them into a warring nation as they wanted to be.

In the course of the same speech which will ever be counted as an epoch-making utterance Mr. Montagu gave expression to the feeling that

* From a contribution to the *Contemporary Review.*

has been uppermost in the minds of all thoughtful critics of the Government of India when he said :—

> The Government of India is too wooden, too iron, too inelastic, too ante-diluvian, to be of any use for the modern purposes we have in view. I do not believe that anybody could ever support the Government of India from the point of view of modern requirements.
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> You cannot reorganise the Executive Government of India, remodel the Viceroyalty, and give the Executive Government more freedom from this House of Commons and the Secretary of State unless you make it more responsible to the people of India.

Dr. H. A. L. Fisher, who sat on the Public Services Commission and is now an important member in the present Cabinet has hit the nail on the head when he says :—

> The Civil Service of India is irresponsible because, although ultimately subject to the Parliament of Great Britain, it is exempt from interference from any popularly constituted body in India and possesses, therefore, a liberty of action considerably in excess of that enjoyed by the administrative agents in our self-governing dominions.
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> . . . . .
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> The Indian Civil Service is the Government. It may accept amendments, it may withdraw a measure in face of criticism which it judges to be well-founded, it may profit by the suggestions of non-official members, but it is master in its own house.
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> The pre-eminence enjoyed by the Indian Civil Service in India is perhaps most clearly illustrated by the position of the Secretariat. In view of the fact that parliamentary government does not exist in India it might have been expected that the Governor or Lieutenant Gover-

nor of an Indian province would rule with the assistance of a Cabinet composed of the administrative heads of the different departments, that the Education Service would supply him with a Minister of Education, the Public Works Department with a Minister of Public Works, the Forest or Agriculture Department with a Minister of Agriculture. This, however, is not the case. These departments indeed do possess official heads, but they are not part of the Provincial Government. Their work comes up, in the first place, before a Secretary to Government, who is always a Member of the Indian Civil Service, and no large proposal can be carried into effect without the imprimatur of the premier service.

. . . . .

Again the system has developed a very close and jealously guarded doctrine of vested interests—the higher post in each service being regarded as the perquisite of the service, as a prize against which recruitment has been made and consequently not to be abolished until the vested interests of every person recruited against them have been satisfied. *Esprit de corps* is no doubt a valuable feature of public life, and there is no *esprit de corps* so strong as that of the Indian Public Services. The Indians themselves not unnaturally regard these services as manifestations of the European spirit of caste.*

It would be difficult to decide as to who has made the stronger indictment of the present Bureaucratic system, Mr. Montagu or Dr. Fisher. It is sufficient for our purpose to point out that the time has come "to remodel, in the light of modern experience, this century old and cumbrous machine" of the Government of India.

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* H. A. L. Fisher. "Imperial Administration" pp. 43-52. 'The Empire and the Future.'

As Sir William Wedderburn has observed rightly, "the fault is not in the men, whose average character and abilities are of a high order, but in the system which places them in a position antagonistic to popular aspirations ; which gives them autocratic power without effective control which stimulates selfish ambition and penalises independence of judgment."*

Indeed, the system cannot avoid producing these deleterious effects on its members, for, as pointed out by Bagehot, in a trenchant criticism :—

It is an inevitable defect, that bureaucrats will care more for routine than for results ; or, as Burke put it, 'that they will think the substance of business not to be much more important than the forms of it.' Their whole education and all the habit of their lives make them do so. They are brought young into the particular part of the public service to which they are attached ; they are occupied for years in learning its forms ; afterwards, for years too, in applying these forms to trifling matters. They are, to use the phrase of an old writer, 'but the tailors of business ; they cut the clothes, but they do not find the body.' 'Men so trained must come to think the routine of business not a means but an end—to imagine the elaborate machinery of which they form a part and from which they derive their dignity, to be a grand and achieved result, not a working and changeable instrument. The very means which best helped you yesterday, may very likely be those which most impede you to-morrow—you may want to do a different thing to-morrow and all your accumulation of means for yesterday's work is but an obstacle to the new work.' 'Not only does a

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* Page 128. Sir William Wedderburn in his 'Life of A. O. Hume.'

bureaucracy thus tend to under-government in point of quality, it tends to over-government in point of quantity. The trained official hates the rude, untrained public. He thinks that they are stupid, ignorant, reckless—that they cannot tell their own interest—that they should have the leave of the office before they do anything.' 'A bureaucracy is sure to think that its duty is to augment official power, official business, or official members rather than to leave free the energies of mankind; it overdoes the quantity of government as well as impairs its quality.

The members of the Civil Service will certainly do well to take to heart the sound advice given to them by a member of their own body, Mr. Bernard Houghton, who served out his term of thirty years in Madras and Burma :—

Though the Indian Civil Service were manned by angels from heaven, the incurable defects of a bureaucratic Government must prevent their best intentions and make them foes to political progress. It must now stand aside and, in the interest of that country it has served so long and so truly, make over the dominion to other hands. Not in dishonour, but in honour, proudly as ship-builders who deliver to seamen the completed ship, may they now yield up the direction of India.

What India yearns for is her rightful place in the Empire and she can only have it in the proper sense of the term by being permitted to enjoy the privilege of Self-Government. Let all Englishmen who seek to interpret India's noble aspirations, remember the following exhortation made recently by Sir Francis Younghusband to an English audience :—

"Lay fast hold of this fact that the leaders of Indian opinion and the great mass and bulk of the people have not the slightest desire, hope or ambition, to sever the tie with England. In making their demands it is not severance but autonomy at which they aim; Self-Government, indeed, they want; but Self-Government within the Empire, not outside it."

Let them remember also the striking statement made by H. H. the Maharaja of Bikanir on the 24th April 1917 in his remarkable speech in London at the Empire Parliamentary Association.

Our aspiration is also to see our country, under the guidance of Britain making material advance on constitutional lines in regard to matters political and economical and ultimately to attain, under the Standard of our King Emperor, that freedom and autonomy which you in this country secured long ago for yourselves and which our more fortunate sister dominions have also enjoyed for some time past.

And the Maharaja rightly added that the problem of Self-Government for India though beset with difficulties "is not such as to be insolvable by British statesmanship and British sympathy and good will."

Thousands and thousands of miles away from India, the millions of the subjects of Britain and her Allies now get dinned into their ears what Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Balfour applaud and endorse in the sentiments of President Wilson,

"that the unity and peace of mankind can only rest upon democracy and upon the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own Government." Sir Robert Borden declares that the creed in which the British Empire should be reared is, *"perfect autonomy, Self-Government, and the responsibility of ministers to their own electorate."* General Smuts proclaims, *"What we want is the maximum of freedom and liberty, the maximum of self-development for the young nations of the Empire."* In England, day after day the glories of the British Empire are sung, the Empire whose freedom is said to be broadening slowly down from precedent to precedent.

On the 22nd March, a few days after the recent Revolution in Russia, Mr. Bonar Law moved the following Resolution in the House of Commons which was unanimously adopted.—

This House sends the Duma fraternal greeting and tenders to the Russian people heartfelt congratulations upon the establishment among them of free institutions, in the full confidence that they will lead to not only the rapid and happy progress of the Russian nation, but the prosecution, with renewed steadfastness and vigour, of the war against the stronghold of autocratic militarism which threatens the Liberty of Europe.

Referring to the same event, Mr. Lloyd George the present Premier, observed that it

marked a world-epoch and was the first great triumph of the principles for which Great Britain entered the war *i.e.*, the dethronement of autocracy and the establishment on a sure footing of popular freedom. Speaking again on the 12th of April, at the American Luncheon Club, Mr. Lloyd George made a remarkable pronouncement in the course of which he said:—

When France, in the eighteenth century, sent her soldiers to America to fight for the freedom and independence of that land, France was also an autocracy. But once the Frenchmen were in America, their aim was freedom, their atmosphere freedom, their inspiration freedom. They acquired the taste for freedom and took it home, and France became free. That is the story of Russia. Russia engaged in this great war for the freedom of Serbia, Montenegro and Roumania. They were fighting for the freedom of Europe and they wanted to make their own country free aud have done with it.

Our countrymen who have gone in thousands to fight in the various theatres of war will surely return with the self-same love for national freedom referred to by the Premier and redoubled, if we may say so, by their own heroic efforts in the cause of the Empire which is also the cause of human liberty. In the same speech the Premier made another very striking observation:—

There are times in history when this world spins so leisurely along its destined course that it seems for centuries to be at a standstill. There are also times

when it rushes along at a giddy pace, *covering the track of centuries in a year.* These are such times.

These remarks apply with no less force to India. The Premier concluded his remarkable speech in the following eloquent words :—

The freeing of Russia from oppression which has covered it like a shroud for so long; the great declaration of President Wilson, coming with the might of the great nation he represents into the struggle for liberty—these are the heralds of dawn. And soon Frenchmen, Americans, British, Italians, Russians yea and Serbians, Belgians, Montenegrins and Roumanians will emerge into the full light of perfect day.

Now all the nations referred to by Mr. Lloyd George in his famous speech and even the English, our rulers, were, in the language of Viscount Palmerston, "in a state of utter barbarism," at the time when India was at the zenith of her civilisation. And are they all to emerge into the light of perfect day and is India alone to be still groping in darkness ?

THE GOVERNANCE OF INDIA

BY

BABU GOVINDA DOSS.

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